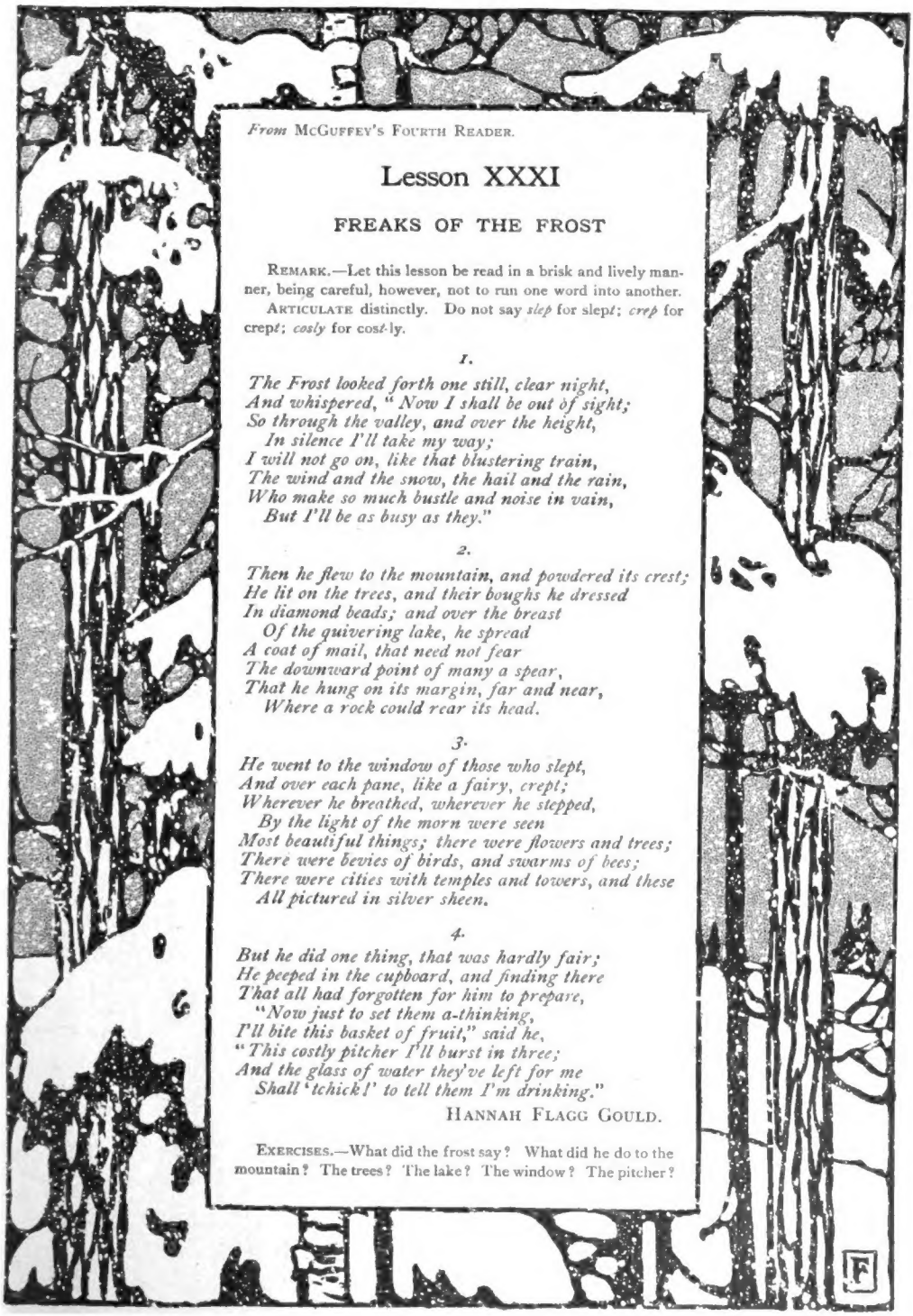

From McGUFFEY'S FOURTH READER.

Lesson XXXI

FREAKS OF THE FROST

REMARK.—Let this lesson be read in a brisk and lively manner, being careful, however, not to run one word into another.

ARTICULATE distinctly. Do not say *slep* for slept; *crep* for crept; *costly* for cost-ly.

1.

The Frost looked forth one still, clear night,
And whispered, "Now I shall be out of sight;
So through the valley, and over the height,
In silence I'll take my way;
I will not go on, like that blustering train,
The wind and the snow, the hail and the rain,
Who make so much bustle and noise in vain,
But I'll be as busy as they."

2.

Then he flew to the mountain, and powdered its crest;
He lit on the trees, and their boughs he dressed
In diamond beads; and over the breast
Of the quivering lake, he spread
A coat of mail, that need not fear
The downward point of many a spear,
That he hung on its margin, far and near,
Where a rock could rear its head.

3.

He went to the window of those who slept,
And over each pane, like a fairy, crept;
Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,
By the light of the morn were seen
Most beautiful things; there were flowers and trees;
There were bevies of birds, and swarms of bees;
There were cities with temples and towers, and these
All pictured in silver sheen.

4.

But he did one thing, that was hardly fair;
He peeped in the cupboard, and finding there
That all had forgotten for him to prepare,
"Now just to set them a-thinking,
I'll bite this basket of fruit," said he,
"This costly pitcher I'll burst in three;
And the glass of water they've left for me
Shall 'tchick!' to tell them I'm drinking."

HANNAH FLAGG GOULD.

EXERCISES.—What did the frost say? What did he do to the mountain? The trees? The lake? The window? The pitcher?

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"GENTLY HE TOOK FROM THE GLITTERING PRINCESS HER ONLY SON."

—"*The Lords of the World*," *page 54.*

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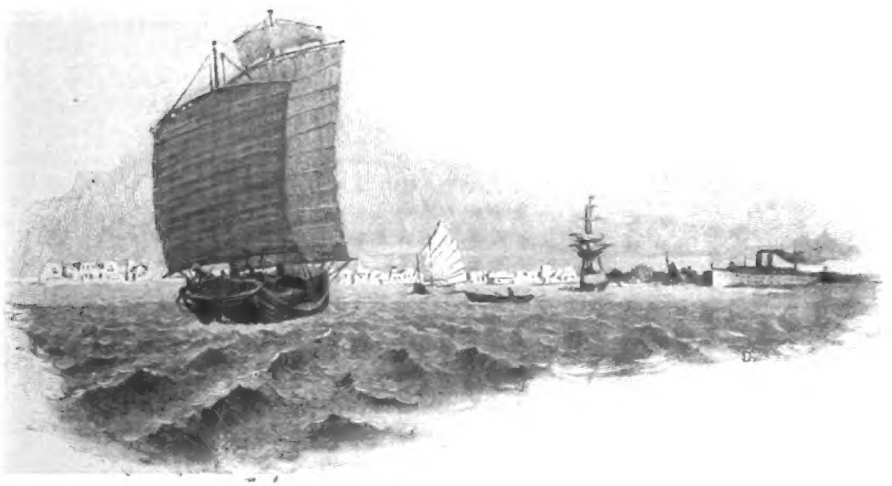
EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XVI. JANUARY, 1907. No. 1.



The Terror of the Sea Caves

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Author of "Watchers of the Trails," "The Heart that Knows," etc.

Illustrations by W. Herbert Dunton

IT was in Singapore that big Jan Laurvik, the diver, heard about the lost pearls.

As he was passing the head of a mean-looking alley near the waterside, late one sweltering afternoon, he was halted by a sudden uproar of cries and curses. The noise came from a courtyard about twenty paces up the alley. It was a fight, evidently, and Jan's blood responded with a sympathetic thrill. But the curses that he caught were all in Malay or Chinese, and he curbed his natural desire to rush in and help somebody. Though he knew both languages very well, he knew that he did not know, and never could know, the people who spoke them. Interference on the part of a stranger might be resented by both parties to the quarrel. He shrugged his great shoulders, and walked on reluctantly.

Hardly three steps had he taken, however, when above the shrill cries a great voice shouted.

"Take that, you damned ——," it began, in English. And at that it ended, with a kind of choking.

Jan Laurvik wheeled round in a flash and ran furiously for the door of the courtyard, which stood half open. He was a Norwegian, but English was as a native tongue to him; and amid the jumble of races in the East he counted all of European speech his brothers.

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Six feet two in height, swift and of huge strength, with yellow hair, so light as to be almost white, waving thickly over a face that was sunburnt to a high red, his blue eyes flaming with the delight of battle, Jan burst in upon the mob of fighters. Several bodies lay on the floor. One dark-faced, low-browed fellow, a Lascar apparently, with his back to the wall and a bloody krees in his hand, was putting up a savage fight against five or six assailants who seemed to be Chinamen and Malays. The body of the Englishman whose voice Jan had heard lay in an ugly heap against the wall, its head far back and almost severed.

Jan's practised eye took in everything at a glance. The heavy stick he carried was, for a mêlée like this, a better weapon than knife or gun. With a great bellowing roar he sprang upon the knot of fighters.

The result was almost instantaneous. The two nearest rascals went down at his first two strokes. At the sound of that huge roar of his all had turned their eyes; and the man at bay, seizing his opportunity, had cut down two more of his foes with lightning slashes of his blade. The remaining two, scattering and ducking, had leaped for the door like rabbits. Jan wheeled, and sprang after them. But they were too quick for him. As he reached the head of the alley they darted into a narrow doorway across the street, which led into a regular warren of low structures. Knowing it would be madness to follow, Jan turned back to the courtyard, curious to find out what it had all been about.

The silence was now startling. As he entered, there was no sound but the painful breathing of the Lascar, whom he found sitting with his back against the wall, close beside the body of the Englishman. He was desperately slashed. His eyes were half closed; and Jan saw that there was little chance of his recovery. Besides that of the Englishman, there were six bodies lying on the floor, all apparently quite lifeless. Jan saw that the place was a kind of drinking-den. The proprietor, a brutal-looking Chinaman, lay dead beside his jugs and bottles. Jan reached for a jug of familiar appearance, poured out a cup of arrack, and held it to the lips of the dying Lascar. At the first gulp of the potent spirit his eyes opened again. He swallowed it all, eagerly, then straightened himself up, held out his hand in European fashion to Jan, and thanked him in Malayan.

"Who's that?" inquired Jan in the same tongue, pointing to the dead white man.

Grief and rage convulsed the fierce face of the wounded Lascar.

"He was my friend," he answered. "The sons of filthy mothers, they killed him!"

"Too bad!" said Jan sympathetically. "But you gave a pretty good account of yourselves, you two. What can I do for you?"

"I'm dead, pretty soon now!" said the fellow indifferently. And from the blood that was soaking down his shirt and spreading on the floor about him, Jan saw that the words were true. Anxious, however, to do something to show his good-will, he pulled out his big red handkerchief, and knelt to bandage a gaping slash straight across the man's left forearm, from which the bright arterial blood was jumping hotly. As he bent, the fellow's eyes lifted and looked over his shoulder.

"Look out!" he screamed. Before the words were fairly out of his mouth Jan had thrown himself violently to one side and sprung to his feet. He was just in time. The knife of one of the Chinamen whom he had supposed to be dead was sticking in the wall beside the Lascar's arm.

Jan stared at the bodies—all, apparently, lifeless.

"That's the one did it," cried the Lascar excitedly, pointing to one whom Jan had struck on the head with his stick. "Put your knife into the son of a dog!"

But that was not the big Norseman's way. He wanted to assure himself. He went and bent over the limp-looking, sprawling shape, to examine it. As he did so the slant eyes opened upon him with a flash of such maniacal hate that he started back. He was just in time to save his eyes, for the Chinaman had clutched at them like lightning with his long nails.

Startled and furious at this novel attack, Jan reached for his knife. But before he could get his hand on it the Chinaman had leaped into the air like a wildcat, wound arms and legs about his body, and was struggling like a mad beast to set teeth into his throat. The attack was so miraculously swift, so disconcerting in its beast-like ferocity, that Jan felt a strange qualm that was almost akin to panic. Then a black rage swelled his muscles; and tearing the creature from him, he dashed him down upon the floor, on the back of his neck, with a violence that left no need of pursuing the question further. Not till he had examined each of the bodies carefully,

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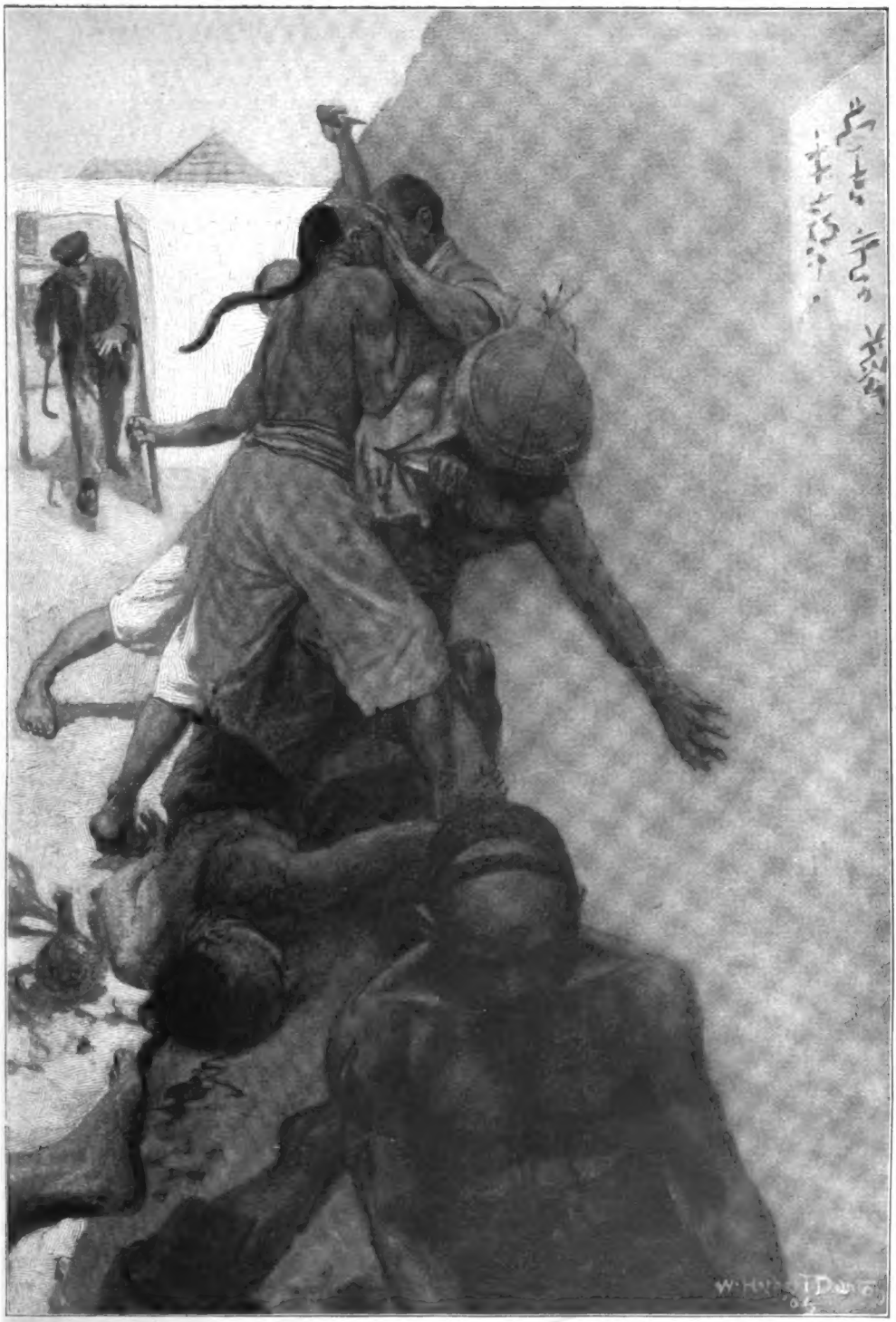

A LASCAR APPARENTLY, WITH HIS BACK TO THE WALL AND A BLOODY KREES IN HIS HAND.

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and tried them with his knife, did he turn again to the wounded Lascar.

"Thank you, my friend!" he said simply.

"You're a good fighting man. You're—like him!" answered the Lascar feebly, nodding toward the dead Englishman. "Give me more arrack. I will tell you something. Hurry, for I go soon."

Jan brought him the liquor, and he gulped it. Then from a pouch within his knotted silk waistband he hurriedly produced a bit of paper which he unfolded with trembling fingers. Jan saw that it was a rough map sketched with India ink and marked with Malayan characters. The Lascar peered about him with fierce eyes already growing dim.

"Are you sure they are all gone?" he demanded.

"Certain!" answered Jan, highly interested.

"They'll try their best to kill you," went on the dying man. "Don't let them. If you let them get the pearls, I'll come back and haunt you."

"I won't let them kill me, and I won't let them get the pearls, if that's what it is that's made all the trouble. Don't worry about that," responded Jan confidently, reaching out his great hand for the paper.

The man handed it over with a groping gesture, though his savage black eyes were wide open.

"That'll show you where the wreck of the junk lies, in seven or eight fathom of water, close inshore. The pearls are in the deck-house. *He* kept them. The steamer was on a reef, going to pieces, and we came up just as the boats were putting off. We sunk them all, and got the pearls. And next night, in a storm, the junk was carried on to the rocks by a current we didn't know about. Only five of us got ashore—for the sharks were around, and the 'killers,' that night. *Him* and me, we were the only ones knew enough to make that map."

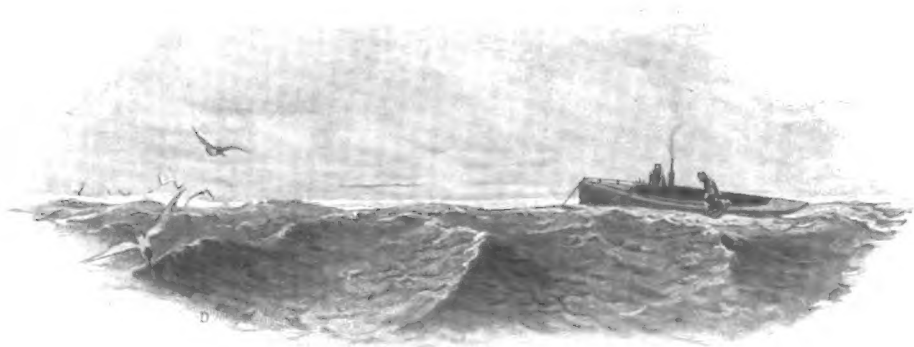
Here the dying pirate sank forward with his face upon his knees. But with a mighty effort he sat up again and fixed Jan Laurvik with terrible eyes.

"Don't let the sons of a dog—get them, or I will—come back—and choke you—in your—sleep," he gasped, suddenly pointing a lean finger straight at the Norseman's face. Then his black eyes opened wide; a strange red light blazed up in them for an instant and faded. With a sigh he toppled over, dead, his head resting on the dead Englishman's feet.

II

JAN LAURVIK looked down upon the slack form with a sort of grim indulgence. "He was game, and he loved his comrade, though he *was* but a bloody-hearted pirate!" he muttered to himself.

With the paper folded small and hidden in his great palm, he glanced again from the door to see if any of the routed scoundrels were coming back. Satisfied on this point, he set himself to examine the precious paper, which held out to his imagination all sorts of fascinating possibilities. He knew that the swift boats carrying the proceeds of the pearl-



HE HAD THE LAUNCH OUTSIDE THE REEF WITH ALL HIS DIVING APPARATUS ABOARD.

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JAN LAURVIK WENT DOWN THROUGH THE GREEN TWILIGHT OF THE SEA.

fisheries were always eagerly watched by the piratical junks infesting those waters, but carried an armament that secured them from all interference. In case of wreck, however, the pirates' opportunity would come. Jan knew that the story he had just heard was no improbable one.

The map proved to be rough but very intelligible. It indicated a stretch of the eastern coast of Java, which Jan recognized; but the spot where the junk had gone down was one to which passing ships always gave a wide berth. It was a place of treacherous anchorage, of abrupt, forbidding, uninhabited shore, and of violent currents that shifted erratically. So much the better, thought Jan, for his investigations, if only the pirate junk should prove to have sunk in water not too deep for a diver to work in. There would be so much the less danger of interruption.

Jan was on the point of hurrying away from the gruesome scene, which might at any moment become a scene of excitement and annoying investigation, when a new idea flashed into his mind. It was over this precious paper that all the trouble had been. The scoundrels who had fled would undoubtedly return as soon as they dared, and would

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HE WAS ON THE VERY POINT OF PLUNGING STRAIGHT IN AMONG THE ARMS AND BURYING HIS BIG BLADE IN THOSE UNSPEAKABLE EYES.

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search for it. Finding it gone, they would conclude that he had it; and they would be hot on his trail. He saw that all he was likely to get was a slit throat.

As he glanced about him for a way out of his dilemma his eyes fell on a bottle of India ink containing the fine-tipped brush with which these Orientals did their writing. His resourcefulness awoke to this chance. The moments were becoming very pearls themselves for preciousness, but seizing the brush he made a workable copy of the map on the back of a letter that he had in his pocket. Next he made a minute and very careful correction in the original, in such a manner as to indicate that the position of the wreck was in a deep fiord some fifty miles east of where it actually was. Then he returned the map to its hiding-place in the dead pirate's belt, and made all haste away. Not till he was back in the European quarter did he feel secure. Once among his fellow whites, where he was a man of known standing and reputed the best diver in the Archipelago, he knew that he would run no risk of being connected with a drinking brawl of Lascars and pirates.

Jan Laurvik had a little capital. But he needed a trusty partner with more. To his experienced wits his other needs were clear. There would have to be a very seaworthy little steamer, powerfully engined for service on that stormy coast, and armed to defend herself against prowling pirate junks. This small and fit craft would have to be manned by a crew equally fit, and at the same time as small as possible.

Up to a certain point, he had no difficulty in verifying the dead pirate's story. He had heard of the wreck of the Dutch steamer Viecht on a reef off the Celebes, and of the massacre of all the crew and passengers, except one small boat-load, by pirates. This had happened about eight months ago. Discreet inquiry developed the fact that the Viecht had carried about $300,000 worth of pearls. The evidence was sufficiently convincing and the prize was sufficiently alluring to make it worth his while to risk the adventure.

It was with a certain amount of Northern deliberation that Jan Laurvik thought these points all out, and made up his mind what to do. Then he acted promptly. First he cabled to Calcutta, to one Captain Jerry Parsons, to join him in Singapore without fail by the next steamer. Next he set himself unobtrusively to the task of finding the craft he wanted and looking up equipment for her.

Captain Jerry Parsons was a New Englander, from Portland, Maine. He had been whaler, gold-hunter, filibuster, copra-trader, General-in-Chief to a small Central American republic, and sheep-farmer in the Australian bush. At present he was conducting a more or less regular trade in precious stones among the lesser Indian potentates. He loved gain much, but he loved adventure more.

When he received the cable from his good friend Jan Laurvik, he knew that both were beckoning to him. With light-hearted zest he betook himself to the steamship offices, found a P. & O. boat sailing on the morrow, and booked his passage.

When he reached Singapore Jan Laurvik told him the story of the dead pirate's map.

"Let's see the map!" said he, chewing hard on the butt of his unlighted Manila.

Jan passed his copy over. The New Englander inspected it carefully, in silence, for several minutes.

"'Tain't much of a map!" said he at length disparagingly. "You think the varmint was straight?"

"In his way, yes," answered Jan with conviction. "He had it in him to be straight in his way, to a friend, which wouldn't hinder him cutting the throats of a thousand chaps he didn't take an interest in."

"When shall we start?" asked Captain Jerry.

The big Norseman's face shone with pleasure, and he reached out his hand. The grip was all, in the way of a bargain, that was needed between them.

"Why, to-morrow night!" he answered.

"Well," said the New Englander, "I'll draw some cash in the morning."

The boat that Jan had hired was a fast and sturdy seagoing tug, serviceable, but not designed for comfort. Jan had retained her engineer, a shrewd and close-mouthed Scotchman. Her sailing-master would be Captain Jerry. For crew he had chosen a wiry little Welshman and two lank, leather-skinned Yankees. To these four, for whose honesty and loyalty he trusted to his own insight as a reader of men, he explained, partially, the nature of the undertaking, and agreed to give them, over and above their wages, a substantial percentage of whatever treasure he might succeed in recovering.

The tug was swift enough to elude any of the junks infesting those waters, but the danger was that she might be taken by surprise at her anchorage while Laurvik was

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under water. He fitted her, therefore, with a Maxim gun on the roof of the deck-house, and armed the crew with repeating Winchesters.

Thus equipped, he felt ready for any perils that might confront him above the surface of the water. As to what dangers might lurk below he felt somewhat less confident, as these he should have to face alone, and he remembered the ominous warning of his pirate friend, about the sharks and the "killers." For sharks Jan Laurvik had comparatively small concern; but for the "killers," those swift and implacable little whales that fear no living thing, he entertained the highest respect.

On the evening of the day after Captain Jerry's arrival the tug Sarawak steamed quietly out of the harbor. The journey, across the Straits and down the treacherous Javan Sea, was so prosperous that Jan Laurvik, his blood steeped in Norse superstition, began to feel uneasy. The sea was like a mill-pond all the way, and they were sighted by no one likely to interfere or ask questions. Jan distrusted Fortune when she seemed to smile too blandly.

The unusual calm made it easy to hold close inshore when they reached that portion of the coast where they must keep watch for the landmarks indicated on the pirate's map. Every reef and surface-ledge boiled ceaselessly in the smooth swell, and by that clear green sea they were saved the trouble of tedious soundings. When they came abreast of a low headland that they had been watching for some time, it suddenly opened out into the semblance of a two-humped camel crouching sidewise to the sea, exactly as it was represented in Jan's map. Just beyond was a narrow bay, and across the middle of its mouth, with a dangerous passage on either side, stretched the reef on which the pirate junk had gone down. At this hour of low water the reef was showing its teeth and snarling with surf. At high tide it would be hidden, and a perfect snare of ships. According to the map, the wreck lay in some eight fathoms of water, midway of the outer crescent of the reef. Behind the reef, where it might serve them as a partial shelter from the sweep of the seas if a northeaster should blow up, they found tolerable anchorage for the tug. For the preliminary soundings, and for the diving operations, of course, Jan planned to use the launch. And, in order to take utmost advantage of the phenomenal calm, he got instantly to work. Within a half-hour of the Sarawak's anchoring he had the launch outside the reef with all his diving apparatus aboard, with Captain Jerry to manage the air-pump, and the Scotch engineer to run the motor.

III

Along the outer face of the reef, at a depth varying from eight to twelve fathoms, ran an irregular rocky shelf, which dipped gradually seaward for several hundred yards, then dropped sheer to the ocean depths. In the warm water along this shelf swarmed a teeming life of gay-colored gigantic weeds and of strange fish that outdid the brightest weeds in brilliancy and unexpectedness of hue. Where the tropic sunlight filtered dimly down through the beryl tide it sank into a marvelous garden whose flowers, for the most part, were living and moving forms, some monstrous, many terrifying, and almost all as grotesque in shape as they were radiant in color. But in that insufficient, glimmering light, which was rather, to a human eye, a vaguely translucent, greenish darkness, these colors were almost blotted out. It took eyes adapted to the depth and gloom to differentiate them clearly.

In the great deeps, also, beyond the edge of the shelf, thronged life in swimming, crawling, or moveless forms, of every imagined and many unimagined shapes, from creatures so tiny that a whole colony could dwell at ease in the eye of a cambric needle, to the Titanic squid, or cuttlefish, with oval body fifty feet in length and arms like writhing constrictors reaching twenty or thirty feet farther. It was a life of noiseless but terrific activity, of unrelenting and incessant death, in a darkness streaked fitfully with phosphorescent gleams from the bodies of the darting, writhing, or pouncing creatures that slew and were slain in the stupendous silence.

Down to these dwellers in the profound, had come some mysterious message or exciting influence, no man knows what, from the prolonged calm on the surface. It affected individuals among various species in such a way that they moved upward into a twilight where they were aliens and intruders. Among those so stung with unrest were several of the gigantic, pallid cuttles. Far offshore, one of these monsters came up and sprawled upon the surface in the unfriendly sun, his dreadful arms curling and uncurling like snakes, till a great sperm-whale, of scarcely more than his own size, came by and fell upon him ravenously, and destroyed him.

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Another of the restless monsters, however, kept his restlessness within the bounds of discretion. Slowly rising, a vast and spectral horror as he came up into the green light, he reached the rim of the ledge. The growing light had already made him uneasy, and he wanted no more of it. Here on the ledge, where food, though novel in character, was unlimited in supply, was variety enough to content him. Gorging himself as he went with everything that swam within reach of his darting tentacles, he moved over the rocky floor until he came to the wreck of the junk.

To his huge, unwinking eyes of crystal black, which caught every tiniest ray of light in their smooth, appalling deeps, the wreck looked strange enough to attract his attention at once. It was quite unlike any rock-form that he had ever seen. Rather cautiously he advanced a giant tentacle to investigate it. But at the touch of the unfamiliar and alien substance the tentacle recoiled in aversion. The cuttlefish backed away. But the wreck made no attempt to pounce upon him. It seemed to have no fight in it. Possibly, on closer investigation, it might prove to be good to eat; and he was hungry. In fact, he was always hungry, for the irresistible corrosives in his great stomach—and he was nearly all stomach—were so swift in their action that whatever he swallowed was digested almost in the swallowing. Since coming upon the ledge he had clutched and devoured two small basking sharks, from six to eight feet long, and a sawfish fully ten feet long, which had not been on their guard against the approach of such a peril. Besides these substantial victims, countless small fry, of every kind, had been drawn deftly into his insatiable maw. Nevertheless, his appetite was again crying out. He tried the wreck again, first carefully, then boldly, till the writhing tentacles, with their sensitive tips and suckers, had enveloped it from stem to stern and searched it inside and out. A few lurking fish and mollusks were snatched from the dark interior by those insinuating and inexorable feelers, and a toothsome harvest of anchored crustaceans was gathered from the hidden surfaces beside the keel. But of the bodies of the pirates that had gone down in the sudden foundering there was nothing left but bones, which the myriad scavengers of the sea had polished to the barren smoothness of ivory.

While the pallid monster was occupied in the investigation of the wreck, those two great bulging black mirrors of his eyes were sleeplessly alert to everything that passed above or about them. Once a swordfish, about seven feet long, sailed carelessly though swiftly some ten feet overhead. Up darted a livid tentacle, and fixed upon it with the deadly sucking-disks. In vain the splendid and ferocious fish lashed out in the effort to wrench itself free. In vain it strove to plunge downward and pierce the puffy monster with its sword. In a second two more tentacles were wrapped about it. Then, all force crushed out of it, it was dragged down and crammed into the conqueror's horrible mouth.

While its mouth was yet working with the satisfaction of this meal, the monster saw a graceful but massive black shape, nearly half as long as himself, swimming slowly between his eyes and the shining surface. At the sight a shudder of fear passed over him. Every waving tentacle shrank back and lay moveless, as if suddenly paralyzed, and he flattened himself down as best he could beside the dark bulk of the wreck. Well he knew that dark shape was a "killer" whale—and a whale was the one being he knew of that he had cause to fear. Against those rending jaws his cable-like tentacles and tearing beak were of no avail, his unarmored body utterly defenseless.

The whale, however—not a sperm, but one of a much smaller, though more savage, species—the "killer"—did not catch sight of the giant cuttlefish cringing below him. Intent on other game, he passed swiftly onward. His presence, however, had for the moment destroyed the monster's appetite. Instead of continuing his search for food, he wanted a hiding-place. He could no longer be at ease for a moment there in the open.

Just behind the wreck the rock-wall rose abruptly to the surface of the reef. Its base was hollowed into a series of low caves, where masses of softer rock had been eaten out from beneath a slanting stratum of more enduring material. The most spacious of these caves was immediately behind the wreck. It was exactly what the monster craved. He backed into it with alacrity, completely filling it with his spectral and swollen body. In the doorway the convex inky lenses of his eyes kept watch, moveless and all-seeing. And his ten pale-spotted tentacles, each thicker at the base than a man's thigh, lay outspread and hidden among the seaweeds, waiting for such victims as might come within reach of their lightning snap and coil.

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The monster had no more than got himself fairly installed in his new quarters, when into the range of his awful eyes came a singular figure, descending slowly through the glimmering green directly over the wreck. It was not so long as the swordfish he had lately swallowed, but it was thick and massive-looking; and it was blunt at the ends, unlike any fish he had ever seen. Its eyes were enormous, round and bulging. From its head, and from one of its curious round, thick fins, extended two slender antennæ straight up toward the surface, so long that their extremities were beyond the monster's vision. It was indeed a strange-looking creature, but he felt sure that it would be very good to eat. In their concealment among the many-colored seaweeds his tentacles thrilled with expectancy, and he waited, like some stupendous nightmare of a spider, to spring the moment the prey came within reach.

It chanced, however, that just as the strange creature, descending without any movement of its fins, did come within reach, there also appeared again, in the distance, the black form of the "killer" whale, swimming far overhead. The monster changed his plans instantly. His interest in the newcomer died out. He became intent on nothing but keeping himself inconspicuous. The newcomer, unconscious of the terror lying in wait so near him and of the dark form patrolling the upper green, alighted upon the wreck and groped his way lumberingly into the cabin, dragging those two slim antennæ behind him.

IV

When Jan Laurvik, in his up-to-date and well-tested diving-suit, went down through the green twilight of the sea, he was doing what it was his profession to do, and he had few misgivings. He had confidence in his equipment, in his skill, and in his mate at the rope and the air-pump, Captain Jerry. For defense against any obtrusive shark or sawfish he carried a heavy, long-bladed, two-edged knife, by far the most effective weapon in deep water. This knife he wore in a sheath at his waist, with a cord attached to the handle so that it could not get away from him. He carried also a tiny electric battery supplying a strong lamp on the front of his headpiece just above his eyes.

From his long experience in sounding and in locating wrecks, Jan Laurvik had acquired an accuracy that seemed almost like divination. His soundings, in this instance, had been particularly thorough, because he did not wish to waste any time at the depth in which he would have to work. He was not surprised, therefore, when he found himself descending upon the wreck of a junk. Moreover, as it was not an old wreck, he concluded that it was the junk that he was looking for. The wreck had settled almost on an even keel; and as he was familiar with craft of her type, he had no difficulty in finding his way about.

It was in the narrow, closet-like structure that served as the junk's cabin that the pirate had said the pearls would be found. The door was open. Turning on his light, which struggled with the water and diffused a ghostly glow, he found himself confronted by a hideous little joss of red-and-gilt lacquer. He knew it was lacquer, and of the best, for nothing else, except gold itself, would have withstood the months of soaking in sea-water. Jan grinned to himself, there within his rubber and copper shell, at this evidence of pirate piety. Then it occurred to him that a man like the pirate captain would probably have turned his piety to practical use. What better guardian of the treasure than a god? Dragging the gaudy deity from his altar, he found the altar hollow. In that secure receptacle lay a series of packages done up with careful precision in wrappings of oiled silk. He knew the style of wrapping very well. For all his coolness, his heart fell to thumping painfully at the sight of this vast wealth beneath his hand. Then he realized that the pressure of the water, and of the compressed air in his helmet, was beginning to tell upon him. In fierce but orderly haste he corded the packages about his middle and turned to leave the cabin. He would make another trip for the lacquer god, and for such other articles of value or *vertu* as the junk might contain.

Jan turned to leave the cabin. But in the doorway he started back with a shudder of dread and loathing. A slender, twisting thing, whitish in color and minutely speckled with livid spots, reached in, and fastened upon his arm with soft-looking suckers that held like death.

Jan knew instantly what the pale, writhing thing was. Out flashed his knife. With a swift stroke he slashed off the detaining tip, where it had a thickness of perhaps two inches. The raw stump shrank back, like a severed worm, and Jan, leaping clear of the

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doorway, signaled furiously to be hauled up. But at the same instant two more of the curling white things came reaching over the bulwarks and fastened upon him—one upon his right arm, hampering him so that he was almost helpless, and the other upon his left leg just above the knee. He felt his signal promptly answered by a powerful tug on the rope. But he was anchored to the wreck as if he had grown to it.

Never before had Jan Laurvik felt the clutch of fear at his heart as he did at this moment. But not for an instant, in the horror, did he lose his presence of mind. He knew that in a pulling match with the giant devil-fish of the deeps, his comrades in the boat far overhead would be nowhere. He had made a mistake in leaving the cabin. Frantically he signaled with his left hand, to "slack away" on the rope; and at the same time, though hampered by the grip on his right arm, he managed to slash off the end of the feeler that had fixed upon his leg. On the instant, whipping the knife over to his left, he cut his right arm clear, and sprang back into the doorway.

Jan's idea was that by keeping just inside the cabin door he could defend himself from being surrounded by the assault of the writhing things. He knew that in the open he would speedily be infolded, and crushed, and engulfed in the jaws of the monstrous squid. But in the narrow doorway the swift play of his blade would have some chance. He gained the doorway. He got fairly inside it, indeed. But as he entered he was horrified to see the thick stump, whose tip he had shorn off, dart in with him and fix itself, by its bigger and more irresistible suckers, upon the middle of his breast. With a shiver he sliced off the fatal disks in one long sweep of his blade; then turned like a flash to sever a pallid tip that had fastened upon his helmet.

Jan was now thankful enough that he had got himself into the narrow doorway. Seemingly undisturbed by the slashings and slicings that some of them had received, the whole ten squirming horrors now darted at the doorway. Jan's knife swooped this way and that; but as fast as he severed one clutch two more would make good. The cut tentacles grew to be the more terrifying, because their suckers were so big; and they themselves were so thick and hard to cut. Presently no fewer than three of the diabolical things laid their loathsome hold upon his right leg below the knee, and began to haul it out through the door. Jan slashed at them madly, but not altogether effectually; for at this moment another tentacle had laid grip upon his arm below the elbow. He had just time to shift the knife again to his left and catch the jamb of the door, when he felt his helmet almost jerked from his head. This grip he dared not interfere with, lest he should cut, at the same time, the air-tube that fed his lungs, and drown like a rat in a hole. All he could do was to hold on to the door-jamb, and carve away savagely at the tentacles that were within reach. If he could get free of those, he calculated that he could then reach the one that had fastened to his head-piece by throwing himself over on his back and so bringing it within range of his vision and his knife. At this moment, however, just as the pressure upon his neck was becoming intolerable, he felt his head suddenly released. One of the great sucking-disks had crushed in the glass of the electric lamp and fastened upon the live wire. The sensation it experienced was evidently not pleasant, for it let go promptly, and secured a new hold upon Jan's left arm.

This hold left him almost helpless, because he could no longer wield the knife freely with either hand. He felt himself slowly being pulled out of the doorway by his right leg. Throwing himself partly backward, and partly behind the door, he gained a firmer brace and at the same time brought his knife again into better play. He would fight to the very last gasp, but he felt that the odds had now gone overwhelmingly against him. The fear of death itself was not heavy upon him. He had faced it too often, and too coolly, for that. But at the manner of this death that confronted him his very soul sickened with loathing. His horror was not lessened by the sight that now met his view. A colossal, swollen, leprous-looking bulk, pallid and spotted, was mounting over the bulwark. Two great oval lenses of clear blackness, set close together, were in the front of the bulk, just over the spot where the tentacles started. These gigantic, appalling, expressionless eyes were fixed upon him. The monster was coming aboard to see what kind of creature it was that was giving him so much trouble.

Jan saw that the end of the fight was very near. The thought, however, did not unnerve him. Rather, it put new fire into his nerves and muscles. By a tremendous wrench he succeeded in reaching with the knife the

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tentacle that bound his right arm. This freedom was like a new lease of life to him. He made swift play with his blade, so savagely that he was able to drag himself back almost completely into the cabin before the writhing horrors again closed upon him. But meanwhile, the monster's gigantic body had gained the deck. Those two awful eyes were slowly drawing nearer; and below them he saw the viscid mouth opening and shutting in anticipation.

At this a kind of madness began to surge up in Jan Laurvik's overtaxed brain. His veins seemed to surge with fresh power, as if there were nothing too tremendous for him to accomplish. He was on the very point of stopping his resistance, plunging straight in among the arms, and burying his big blade in those unspeakable eyes. It would be a satisfaction, at least, to force them to change their expression. And then, well, something might happen!

But before he could put this desperate scheme into execution, something did happen. Jan was aware of a sudden darkness overhead. The monster was evidently aware of it, too, for every one of the twisting tentacles suddenly shrank away, leaving Jan to lean up against the doorway, free. The next moment a huge black shape descended perpendicularly upon the fleshy mountain of the monster's back, and a rush of water drove Jan backward into the cabin.

As the electric lamp had gone out when the glass was broken, Jan could see but dimly the awful battle of giants now going on before him. So excited was he that he forgot his own new peril. The danger was now that in the struggle one or other of the battling bulks might crush the cabin flat, or entangle the air-tube and life-line. In either case Jan's finish would be swift; but in comparison with the loathsome death from which he had just been so miraculously saved, such an end seemed not very dreadful. He was altogether absorbed in watching the prowess of his avenging rescuer.

Skilled in deep-sea lore as he was, he knew the dark fury that had swooped down upon the devil-fish. It was a "killer" whale, or grampus, the most redoubtable and implacable fighter of all the kindred of the sea. Jan saw its wide jaws shear off three mighty tentacles at once, close at the base. The others writhed up hideously and fastened upon him, but under the surging of his resistless muscles their tissues tore apart like snapped cables. Huge masses of the monster's ghastly flesh were bitten off and thrown aside. Then, gaining a grip that took in the monster's head and the roots of the tentacles, the "killer" shook his prey as a bulldog might shake a fat sheep. The tentacles straightened out slackly. Jan saw that the fight was over and that it was high time for him to remove from that too strenuous neighborhood. He gave the signal vehemently, and was drawn up, without attracting his dangerous rescuer's notice. When Captain Jerry hauled him in over the boat side, he fell in an unconscious heap.

When Jan came to himself he was in his bunk on the Sarawak. It was an utter physical and nervous exhaustion that had overcome him. His swoon had passed into a heavy sleep, and when he awoke he sat up with a start. Captain Jerry was at his side, bursting with suppressed curiosity; and the Scotch engineer was standing by the bunk.

"Waal, partner, you've delivered the goods all right!" drawled Captain Jerry. "They're the stuff, not a doubt of it. But kind o' seemed to us up here you were having high jinks of one kind or another down there. What was it?"

"It was hell!" responded Jan, with a shudder. Then he took hold of Captain Jerry's hand, and felt it, as if to make sure it was real, or as if he needed the feel of honest human flesh again to bring him to his senses.

"Ugh!" he went on, swinging out of the bunk. "Let me get out into the sunlight again! Let me see the sky again! I'll tell you all about it by an' by, Jerry. But wait. Were all the packages on me, all right?"

"I reckon!" responded Captain Jerry. "There was six of 'em tied on to you. I reckon they're worth the three hundred thousand all right!"

"Well, let's get away from this place quick as we can get steam up again!" said Jan. "There's more swag down there, I guess—lots of it. But I wouldn't go down again, nor send another man down, for all the millions we've all of us ever heard tell of. Mr. McWha, how soon can we be moving?"

"Ten meenutes, more or less!" replied the Scotchman.

"All right! When we're outside of this accursed bay, an' round the 'Camel' yonder, I'll tell you what it's like down there under that shiny green."

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Soldiers of the Common Good

By CHARLES EDWARD RUSSELL

Author of "The Greatest Trust in the World"

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Fourteen months ago, Charles E. Russell, on behalf of EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, started out to investigate economic conditions in foreign lands, especially to find out in what manner our fellows in Europe, Asia, and Australia are dealing with the great problems that so beset us here. Having finally made the round of the world, describing the institutions of each country, he sets forth in this article, the last of the series, the sum of his observations. Our readers who have followed Mr. Russell on his remarkable tour will find these last words of the greatest interest and importance, for he points out that in all the countries except ours there is being constructed a new economic system the basis of which is the supremacy of the interests of the community over the profits of the individual. This world-wide movement that seeks to improve existing conditions by limiting greed is, Mr. Russell concludes, a notable and beneficent development, and one to which we should give serious heed.

CHAPTER XXXIII

A SKIRMISH ON THE FIRING-LINE

ONE day, when Richard John Seddon was Premier of New Zealand, there came to his office in Wellington a stately gentleman of the greatest consideration, who had to communicate to the head of the government a matter of importance. He was late come from England, where he was chief owner of a prosperous manufacturing enterprise, and he was willing to impart knowledge that he purposed to favor New Zealand with a great branch factory that would employ an army of workmen and spread far around the blessings of prosperity. Also to say other things. Now, New Zealand is eager for new industries. Hence the gentleman not unreasonably looked upon himself as a benefactor and a popular person.

Incidentally, I may observe that one of the products of this gentleman's beneficent factory is an immense quantity of poisonous offal which in Merrie England he dumps into a convenient running stream, and another is a quantity of poisonous gas under which his workmen and workwomen wither away and are slowly murdered. In New Zealand, where it is really believed that the injury of one of us is the concern of all of us, where people do not think it necessary to kill other people in order to be prosperous, where the first care of the government is given to those that most need care, there is a very stringent law against depositing any kind of refuse, offal, garbage, or pollution in any stream or body of water. No municipality nor individual nor even a big thieving corporation that has fat campaign subscriptions to offer, can use any stream for a sewer. And the chief object of the stately gentleman was to induce Mr. Seddon to connive at the violating of this law.

He had much to say, and Mr. Seddon listened with an inviting patience while his visitor dwelt eloquently upon the great advantages the new factory would bring to the country, how it would afford employment for so many thousands, and use so much of New Zealand's materials, and attract so many allied industries, and build up so much commerce, if only that law about open sewers need not be enforced. And when he made pause at last, Mr. Seddon looked up sweetly and said:

"Oh, no; you can't do that."

So the gentleman began again and rehearsed his story more forcibly than before, and when he was at an end, Mr. Seddon said just as before:

"Oh, no; you can't do that."

At this the gentleman lost his temper. He rose angrily and, towering above Mr. Seddon, he said:

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"Very well; we shall not bring our factory here at all then, and your people will lose all this great business."

And Mr. Seddon gently tapped together the ends of his great fingers and said:

"I hope, dear sir, you will not let that fact cause you too much distress. I understand that there are still places in this world where you can poison people. But you cannot poison them in New Zealand."

There was the whole situation in a nutshell. I could by no chance hit upon words better fitted to end this inquiry with one illuminating summary of the whole matter. Into one phrase Mr. Seddon had compressed the economics of the rest of the world and the economics of New Zealand. "There are still places where you can poison people; you cannot poison them in New Zealand." Why should we poison them anywhere? Why should there be any place on earth where human life is worth less than in this practical Utopia of the South Seas? Why should there be any place where men are less decent or kindly or more willing to throttle one another for a handful of dollars? It is well to have factories and more business and more commerce; New Zealanders know that. But they have resolved that, if they cannot have factories without industrial insanity; without piling up around them such earthly infernos as Paterson, New Jersey, and Birmingham, England; without having open sewers like the Passaic and disease-breeders like the Merrimac; without great populations reduced to mere brutality and rat-hole living—then they will not have factories at all.

And upon that rock we shall some day have to stand. We may like it or dislike it; we may argue against it until we are blue in the face; we may disprove it with all the learned theorists beneath the sun. Still to that one proposition we shall come back at last, that in a perfectly cold-blooded view, merely as a plain business principle, not one of the triumphs of that industrial development in which we have gloried is worth having if it involves unsanitary conditions or the madness of competition that carries one man to superfluity and a thousand men to hell. It is better to have more health and less wealth, says the New Zealand proverb. True words. And if all these memorable changes mean anything, they mean a progression to exactly that statement as the first fundamental of a genuine civilization.

CHAPTER XXXIV

A FEW PRACTICAL COMPARISONS

SUPPOSE that for the moment we put aside every other consideration of these matters and look at them solely from the points of view of physical comfort, of the external accessories of life, and of common and public honesty.

We are, let us say, in a great American city, Chicago, for an example, at five minutes past six o'clock in the evening. Here come pouring out of the office-buildings and workshops an immense working population, men, women, and children that must be transported to their homes. For reasons of their incomes they must needs live at a great distance from their employment, and there is no means of conveyance except in the cars of the local street-railroad company. Having, by means of a swindling device called a franchise, secured the exclusive right to use the public highways for this purpose, the company has a monopoly of the traffic. And the gentlemen that manipulate the company for their own benefit having issued vast quantities of watered stock, fictitious bonds, and baseless securities for their sole profit, their desire to earn an income on this false capitalization results in an insufficient service. About one-third as many cars are run as are needed, that expenses may be kept down and revenue enhanced.

The people stand in crowds at each corner waiting for the infrequent cars. Although it be winter, with snow or sleet or a howling gale, and although these people have just come from the poisoned and overheated atmospheres of stuffy shops, still they must stand there, waiting on the pleasure of the company that has possessed itself of their streets. Some walk far up the line to catch a coming car, as if it were a rare and delicate privilege to ride home; and some stand and shiver.

When a car comes, a riot ensues. Men and women fight like maniacs to get aboard; with arms, hands, elbows, body to body, snarling and gouging, they struggle with one another as their ancestors in the jungle fought and clawed for food. If they cannot win entrance to this car they must wait long for another. The car is filled to three times, four times its normal capacity. Men, women, and children, young girls from the sweat-shops, clerks and day-laborers, are hurled and forced together and jammed until hardly can they

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breathe for the pressure around them; a fourth of the company sitting down, the rest standing, slung hither and thither by the motion of the car; the platforms jammed, men clinging with toes and fingers upon the very coupling arrangement, in imminent peril of their lives.

Upon a track old, worn, and out of repair, the car tosses and pitches like a ship at sea, making a thunderous racket. It is filthy, unsanitary, reeking with germs, badly lighted, and would be uncomfortable even if it were only moderately filled. The employees, being badly paid, badly treated, overworked, and underfed, are surly and indifferent. All the apparatus is antiquated and inefficient; the company cannot provide an efficient plant and at the same time pay dividends on that fraudulent stock.

Inside the car the passengers suffer both torture and indignity. Women that have been on their feet all day toiling like galley-slaves for the equivalent of a crust, toiling to be decent and keep out of the pit, these women stand for an hour maybe, tormented as one upon the rack. The ventilation is bad, the crowding is gross, bestial, and degrading, the enforced physical contact is vile. Every instinct of respect for womanhood protests against it as a thing intolerably offensive, and every instinct of common decency revolts in disgust. That we endure it for so much as a day brands us before the world as a nation of boors, and silences every reply to the sneering scoffs of foreigners. In not another corner of the globe, civilized or savage, would such things be allowed. You could not with impunity so degrade and insult women and torture children in the Fiji or the Gilbert Islands.

Yet these are the scenes that are enacted every week-day in almost every American city. In New York the street-car company operates fewer cars in 1906 than it operated in 1905 and carries more passengers and makes more money; and when the public complains, the managers laugh, and inquire what the public is going to do about it. In Brooklyn the street-car company ostentatiously violates a decision of the Supreme Court of the State and hires men to assault passengers who desire to have that decision respected. In New York the management of the company, consisting in part of gentlemen that ought to be in the penitentiary, cheats the government of some annual millions and seems to regard that feat as another good joke. In Chicago the right of the company to hold and possess most of the public streets it occupies expired nearly four years ago, and the Supreme Court of the United States has twice so decided. And yet so powerful has the company become through the wealth it has wrung from the citizens that it has not been expelled from the streets to which it has no legal right, nor been made to stop robbing, squeezing, and manhauling its passengers, nor forced to show the least regard for either law or the Supreme Court decisions. I suppose I need hardly point out that this is a condition of Anarchy, pure and simple; but this is exactly the situation that exists in one of the most intelligent and progressive of American cities. No doubt the eminent gentlemen that are responsible for these things would be grieved and shocked if they were to be designated as more dangerous Anarchists than were ever bred in any slum of Europe, but that would be only a sober statement of fact.

That is America, under the rule of the idea of Private Gain. Now, in the light of what we have observed in these travels let us recall how these things are managed under the idea of the Common Good. We are in Manchester, England, let us say, at the close of the working-day. Here is again an immense working population, men, women, and children, to be transported quickly and simultaneously. The great traction system of Manchester, one of the most wonderful and admirable of the works of men, radiating to every part of the great human hive, is the property and chiefly the creation of the city. It is operated for the people, not for a combination of stock-gamblers and highwaymen. There is a plenty of cars everywhere, there is no rush, no crowding, no rioting, no fighting, no jungle. Every passenger has a seat; no one is allowed to stand. The cars are scrupulously clean and well lighted. The employees, being decently paid and decently treated instead of being kicked about like dogs, are courteous and obliging. All the apparatus is of the latest design and efficiency. The track is perfect; the cars move without a jar and almost noiselessly. The people go comfortably and sanely to and from their employment, and they know that of the money they pay for their transporting the profit is returned to them through the public treasury.

That is Manchester, under the idea of the Common Good, and it is practically every

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city in Great Britain or on the Continent where the Common Good has had a chance.

Or take our railroad problem. We have allowed these great corporations, now chiefly owned by six or eight men, to go on year after year, building up trusts, violating any law that stands in their way, giving rebates, ruining small dealers, deviling politics, controlling elections, and absorbing power. When we wake up to some of the monstrosity of this thing, it takes months upon months to pass a law that will even nominally restrict or regulate its operations, and when with prodigious effort the law has been passed we find that it is a huge fraud, really drawn in the interest of the very power it was supposed to restrict. The railroad company corrupts every fount and channel of American political and public life. The foulness of its influence is felt in every community from the smallest hamlet to the largest city. Politically, it is an unmitigated and almost unlimited power for evil. Commercially, it is in the last analysis organized chiefly for plunder. It is always overcapitalized, and the dividends on its fraudulent capitalization it wrings from the public by means of two species of robbery, to wit, high charges and bad service. It murders people on its needless single tracks and on its criminal grade-crossings. It exists for one purpose and that is to gouge and swindle and lie and steal and break all laws, if need be, but to get dividends. It controls almost every political convention, nominates almost every candidate, and befogs and muddles for its own benefit almost every election issue.

That is America, under the idea of Private Gain. Go back again to Germany, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, under the idea of the Common Good. Why is public and political life in these countries so much cleaner? Why are the elections free from corruption and the political parties from the reproach of money influence? Why are there no bosses in Switzerland, no machines, no huge campaign subscriptions, no boodle, no bribery? Men are the same all about the world: to talk about the responsibility of racial difference is folderol. If bosses were possible in Switzerland, Australia, and New Zealand, those countries would have them in abundance. The reason why none exists there is because these countries have abolished the chief source of corruption by abolishing the transportation company.

That is America, under the idea of Private Gain. In Germany, under the idea of the Common Good, the people have good service instead of bad, low prices instead of high, and the profits are turned into the public treasury instead of into private hoards.

In New Zealand you can ship a car-load of fruit 300 miles in a refrigerator-car and the total charges for freight, use of refrigerator-car, icing, and re-icing are $6.50. In New Zealand, where the railroads are operated for the Common Good, it is held as much the duty of the road to deliver in good condition the fruit it transports as to deliver uninjured the furniture it transports. For years some such idea prevailed in America. With the advent of that genial philanthropist, the Beef Trust, this was changed, the refrigerator-car began its true career as the bandit of commerce, and now, under the rule of Private Gain, unlimited and unrestrained, the icing charges alone from Lawton, Mich., to Chicago, 120 miles, are $25. I give some other figures that indicate the extent to which we pay for our system. They should afford food for thought when compared with the New Zealand rates. They represent merely icing charges, not freight, it should be observed:

	Distances, Miles.	Charges.
Fennville, Mich., to Chicago ...	137	$25.00
Decker, Ind., to Chicago.	247	45.00
Plainville, Ga., to Cincinnati ...	404	52.50
Plainville, Ga., to Louisville, Ky.	338	52.50
Wilmington, N. C., to New York	597	60.00
Gibson, Tenn., to Chicago	522	84.00
Plainville, Ga., to Indianapolis .	528	57.50
Humboldt, Tenn., to Chicago...	500	84.00

Eighty-four dollars for refrigerating a car traveling 500 miles. That is America. Six dollars and fifty cents for freight and refrigeration in a car traveling 300 miles. That is New Zealand. Can it be doubted that we are the wise people of the earth?

There is, to be sure, another side to this story. The New Zealanders, it is undeniable, get their transportation at very much cheaper rates than we get ours, but they are deprived of the happiness of knowing that they are adding to the private fortunes of the interesting Armour family; and it must be for the sake of this reasonable happiness that we submit with gladness to an imposition so gross.

And here we come upon a very curious matter. We admit and with sad faces we deplore the corruption of our politics and legislative bodies, but we have some inex-

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plicable aversion to the means that have purified the politics and legislative bodies of other nations. We denounce the bosses and yet we uphold the corporations that alone create and maintain the bosses. We cry out against the machines and protect the corporations that finance the machines. We know that the corporation laws of Germany, Switzerland, and most European countries would have made our insurance scandals impossible, but we will not ask for any such laws in our country. We see the government of New Zealand operating the best and safest insurance scheme in the world, but we will not ask our government to do anything of that kind. We see the governments of Germany, France, Switzerland, Australia embarking upon beneficent old-age pensions, workingmen's insurance, and other provident innovations. We will not suggest any such beneficence for ourselves. *The strangest mystery that confronts any traveler in this and other countries is that, alone of all peoples, we are not touched by the world's movement.*

Yet, we know, of course, that we do not deliberately choose to have bad conditions instead of good. Suppose we could get before the people squarely and definitely and for all time the plain questions involved: Do you wish to be robbed by your traction company? Do you care to be mauled by the Brooklyn Rapid Transit ruffians? Do you like to have the Subway Company defraud the city of its just revenues? Do you really prefer bad service to good service? Do you like to be crushed in an overloaded car? Do you think such spectacles as can be seen every night at the New York end of the Brooklyn Bridge are consistent with decency? Suppose we could submit such questions to the popular vote and have the votes fairly cast and honestly counted, there would be no doubt as to the popular verdict, would there?

That is plain enough. But thanks largely to the gentlemen that 120 years ago thought this country ought to be a monarchy, you can never in any such way get any such questions to the public. In America the only way you can submit issues is through candidates and parties, and the moment they are so submitted the organs of public opinion that are owned or controlled in the interest of the corporations begin with infinite skill to distort and disguise the issue. They tell us that the real question at stake is the blessed tariff, or supporting the President, or the color of a candidate's hair, or what his grandmother believed, or whether he wears pink shirts, or something like that; and they tell us this so vociferously and fool us about it so ably that we march up to the polls to settle the pink-shirt question and totally forget the question of good service or bad service, of honesty or theft.

But in Switzerland, where there is a genuine instead of a nominal democracy, you cannot play any such game as that. There the plain question comes without disguise or distortion straight to every voter. Do you wish to be robbed, or don't you? Do you wish to be thrown on your head for obeying a Supreme Court decision, or don't you? And the decision of the voter is the last word on that matter. So that the first step toward putting an end to the robbery and the crushing would seem to be to give the control of their affairs directly into the hands of the people and take it away from the robbers. And there is no lesson to be learned in a survey of the world's progress more important than the immense potency of a purely democratic form of government to do away with the ills that beset us. It is behind the bulwarks erected in our system to curb and thwart the popular will that all the dishonest corporations find protection. So long as the corporations select our public officers and frame our laws, the idea that we can make any headway against them is a mere dream.

All these considerations have nothing to do with any theories. Here are the naked facts, as certain as day and night, that other cities than ours do get along without strap-hanging, without crowded cars, without anarchistic corporations, without the debauching of official morality by vested interests. Other countries than ours do get along without railroad rebates, corporation graft, or corporation interference with public affairs. And so long as that is so, the condition of our public services is an indelible disgrace for which no ingenuity can devise an excuse.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE WORLD'S AWAKENING

So for these problems that impend above us, for the threat of accumulation, the threat of undue and unnatural power in the hands of a few men, the imminent peril of too much and too little, the cancer of the slum and the dry-rot of the palace, the monstrous crimes of

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greed and the sufferings of need, for the irresponsible and unlicensed power of the corporation, the scandalous misuse of wealth and the growth of poverty, the corruption that undermines free government, for the menace of revived feudalism and the spread of reactionary principles inseparable from the concentrating of great wealth and the narrowing of opportunity, for all this the rest of the world is moving toward one remedy.

No one can observe with other eyes than those of a fish the trend of progress and not perceive that elsewhere than in the United States men are coming to the conclusion that modern conditions and modern industrial concentration have rendered useless the old theories of government, and that for the ills modern conditions create, two things must be done:

First, to substitute the interests of the community for the interest of the fortunate or powerful individual;

Second, to restrain Greed, not by regulating it but by making impossible some of its most obvious and dangerous operations.

We can call this by any name we please. Names are not important. All I care about is that the movement is unmistakable, that it has every appearance of one of those epoch-making upheavals that are ever afterward landmarks of history, and that, except for ourselves, it is universal.

Also, let us note, it is exactly in accord with what we know of the human evolution, wherein the general welfare has steadily threatened the Vested Interests and progress has resulted from changed conditions, not from fatuous legislation. We go on everywhere passing laws to make men moral or to prevent crime by punishing criminals after crime has been committed, and all the time the morality of men is enhanced only by increased intelligence, and the crimes of men are discouraged chiefly by improved conditions.

There used to be a place on the Thames below London Bridge (at Limehouse Reach, I think it was) called Execution Dock, whereof the purpose was to regulate and discourage piracy. We are prone to forget the fact, but piracy (maritime) used to be a tremendous industry and flourished at least as gloriously as stock-watering flourishes now. All the civilized nations had savage laws against piracy, and in every corner of the three oceans pirates abounded. The more drastic the laws, the more numerous the pirates. The function of Execution Dock was to furnish object-lessons of these laws for the minds of simple sailormen. How? Why, they used to string pirates up by the neck and let them dry in rows so that sailors going up and down might see them. And many a pirate crew has sailed past these grisly relics and looked up at them and gone to pirating the next week. As a discourager and regulator the show was a failure. It is even of record that some honest crews went by Execution Dock and turned pirates at the Nore before they were well out of the Thames.

Very able lawmakers set their brains to work to devise statutes that would stop piracy, and the more they devised the more piracy spread. Men must still be alive that remember when it was a peril of the seas, when merchantmen for India and China went armed to the teeth, broadsides of great guns, sixteen to twenty of them, men-at-arms and skilled gunners in the crew, boarding cutlases in the companionway. And yet the laws were most ably planned. So late as 1836 the ship in which Richard Henry Dana sailed from Boston on his immortal "Two Years Before the Mast" was chased by a pirate in North Atlantic waters and narrowly escaped capture. And still the laws were all that could be desired for ingenious severity and still piracy thrived. And then steam came and was universally adopted, and piracy became a reminiscence and the laws against it legal curiosities.

The laws had not discouraged or regulated piracy; changed conditions had made it impossible.

Similarly, they used to put highwaymen to death with terrible tortures in the presence of absorbed and brutalized multitudes, but the highwayman continued to infest English roads until steam and the telegraph and denser populations made his trade impossible. Conditions had changed; the laws remained the same.

And it is from conditions also that the impulse comes toward improvement, not from theories, nor from the sacred pages of the learned writers. Very few of the men that wrought in the two great recent revolutions in English life, which brought about Cooperation and Municipal Trading, have ever reflected upon any theories involved in these profound changes. They were driven by one set of conditions into another, without much thinking about either. The first Cooperators

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were forced by hunger and hopelessness to a leap in the dark, and the Municipal Traders have with as little ratiocination revolted against the bad service and high prices of the private corporations. Yet both movements have worked along the same lines to the same end, and both have had the same results, in that they have not merely regulated nor legislated about existing evils, but have produced conditions that make some of the evils impossible.

In the British towns they did not think it enough to limit the plunder that gas companies and traction companies might take from the public; they did away with the plunder by doing away with the companies. In Germany and Switzerland they did not think it enough to tell the corporations to be good and stop lurking in dark alleys with sandbags for defenseless citizens; they took away the sandbags and fenced up the dark alleys and made it impossible for corporations to operate except in broad daylight and under the eyes of a policeman. All about Europe they did not think it enough to declare that meat-packers should not furnish diseased or rotten meat except under the official seal of the government; they did away with these disease-germs by doing away with the private packing-house. In England they did not think it enough to regulate telegraph-rates; they abolished the graft of watered stock and extortionate charges by abolishing the telegraph companies. In Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, all about Europe, they did not stop to bother with flabby and fictitious laws purporting to forbid rebates and railroad swindles; they put an end to rebates and swindles by making the railroad an instrument for the Common Good instead of an instrument for Private Gain. In London the County Council was not content to tell property-owners to build nice tenement-houses for their tenants; it bought land and built the tenements itself.

In other words, the substance of all these mighty movements around the world has been to create conditions under which a part at least of the predations of wealth would be impossible.

And it should be noted as a significant fact that none of the nations or communities that have embarked upon these experiments shows any desire to return to the old conditions of corporation rapine. If you were to suggest to a great English city that it ought to abandon municipal ownership of its street-car lines, the citizens would think you crazy; if you tried to preach the private ownership of German railroads, nobody would waste time in listening. Switzerland is well satisfied with her national railroad venture; New Zealand wants no change. Simply as business propositions without regard to theories or sentiment, all these peoples are convinced that they are on the right track. When I wrote the story of the nationalizing of the Italian railroads I put in some doubt as to the result of that venture. I need not have doubted. There is something about the idea of the Common Good that seems to create ability and nerve courage. Reflect upon the huge success in the face of every obstacle won by the Cooperative movement in England, without conspicuous leaders, without a center of directing generalship, without the impulse of greed or gain or the incentive of selfishness, with the open or covert opposition of every vested interest, with hostile parliaments and a sneering public; and in spite of all, no enterprise of Gain and Capital has in the same time achieved an equal business success. When the moralists tell us it is good for a man's soul to work for the welfare of others, they tell only half of the story. It is good for the man, and it is good for everybody else, and it is good for the thing the man does. If any one remarks that this is a spirit quite different from that in which I wrote the chapters on Cooperation, I admit it. I have seen much since then of the tremendous and almost unknown possibilities of the Common Good. *Not greed nor avarice nor aggrandizement nor lust of power nor selfishness nor brutal instincts nor any other phase of bestiality by which we excuse present conditions is a force equal to this, and from what I have seen in Switzerland, Australia, and New Zealand I must needs confess that what seemed to me at first a thing strange and idealistic seems now to represent but the normal state of man.*

But about the Italian railroads. The London *Morning Post* has lately made a thorough and obviously judicial and impartial examination of the state of the Italian roads after a year of government operation, and it finds notable improvement in every branch of the service. For all the obstacles of a monstrous purchase price, and the incubus of a weak and ineffective form of government, the occasion has called forth the necessary ability, the problems are being worked out to effective answers. In Italy as else-

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where it is found that as Greed is restrained and the community placed before the individual, to that extent corruption is lessened and life bettered. *So that the whole development resolves itself at last into no more than this, that to do away with evil in the state it is first necessary to do away with the conditions that produce evil.*

Perhaps we in this country give insufficient heed to the immense force of this trend (outside of our own country) toward the communal good. Take but the single item of government railroad ownership. In the beginning practically all railroad enterprises were owned by private capital. In 1900 there were 167,813 miles of government railroads in the world outside of the United States. Since that year Switzerland, Italy, and Japan have taken over their privately owned lines and the principle of government ownership has been extended everywhere, so that in 1906 there are 220,750 miles (outside of the United States) owned by government and only 91,946 miles owned by private companies.* It seems likely from present indications that in a few more years there will be hardly a mile of privately owned railroad in all Europe except possibly in Spain. The life of private ownership in England will certainly be short, and the nationalization of the French roads is definitely settled.

It is necessary to bear in mind these facts in order to understand the amazement and mirth with which intelligent foreigners learn of such legislative wonders of our making as the railroad rate bill and the meat inspection bill. To them solemn and elaborate fooling of this kind seems to belong to the childhood of the race.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SOME GLIMPSES OF THE WAY OUT

At the bottom all these changes are the footsteps of advancing democracy.

Why not? Retrace these wanderings long enough to go again into that east end of London that is the sad and terrible warning to nations. You see here this vast horde, countless, listless, hopeless, ill-fed or unfed, ill-clad, ill-developed, neglected, uneducated, narrow-chested, anemic, tubercular, brutish, sodden, pallid, dull-eyed, the finished and terrific products of our civilization, born in the subcellar and reared in the foul air and sickening steams of the slums. What shall we do with these?

Let us take that man caterwauling down the asphalt court that Sunday noon. There is the portentous figure of the times; there is the creature to watch and study and observe with a fearful disquietude. At the end of it all, he in his rags and his dirt and his fathomless misery is the symbol and impetus of all this. He is the quintessence of the old theory, he is the child of inequality, he is the product of the idea that men shall be turned loose in the world free to prey upon one another, he is the ultimate result of your *laissez-faire*, gentlemen; note him well. This is what comes of allowing Greed to work its will. Not pretty to look upon; no! And he will be less pretty when his swarming kind shall still further increase, when his tallow face shall show in every corner.

From all these movements and experiments it is clear enough, brethren, that the time is not far off when we shall have to get off this man's back and let him up and give him a chance at least equal with our own. We shall have to cease crowding him into the odds and ends of dark caverns, and see to it that he has just as much light and life as the rest of us. We shall have to stop poisoning him with foul air and ruining his mind with savage toil. And we shall have to do these things, not because of any theory or ism or dogma or doctrine or school or agitation, and not merely because we ought to do them, but because anything else will breed shapes and forces and epidemics and national weaknesses that will bring our house about our ears as surely as the sun shines. If we do not want India, we must stop creating the conditions that made India; if we do not want to live in one huge Whitechapel, we must stop building Whitechapels; if we do not want epidemics, we must stop breeding them; if we do not want a huge, inert, and worthless population to fail us in the time of national need, we must abolish the conditions that produce that kind of a population; if we do not want all the resources of the country to be absorbed by the American maharajas, we must stop creating ryots and pariahs.

* These figures are taken from tables carefully compiled for many years by Judge A. Van Wagenen, of Sioux City, Iowa, an authority to whom I gladly make acknowledgment for much valuable information about gov rnment ownership. In the totals for 1906 most of the Japan se mileage is in the private-ownership column as the nationalization was not complete when the table was prepared. In many countries of Europe the only railroads in private hands are timber, manufacturing, or quarry roads, but all these are included in the private-ownership column.

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You see it is all one story from the poor weavers groping around at Toad Lane to the broad beneficence of New Zealand legislation, and all the story comes at last to this bundle of rags in the squalling court. He is what he is because of the pressure of One Thing that has crushed and crushed him until there is left but this sodden pulp of man. But the same One Thing crushed everybody above him as far as to the iron feet of the Thing itself. What made this bundle of rags is the same thing that drove the Rochdale weavers to devise Cooperation, that made Cooperation a world-wide defense for persons in moderate circumstances, that forced the English municipalities to own their gas-works and water-works and street-car lines and telephone systems, that brought about the nationalization of the German railroads, that will shortly achieve the nationalization of all the railroads of Europe, that is chiefly responsible for every publicly owned enterprise in the civilized circuit. The bundle of rags, squeezed out of shape by the pressure of the Thing, has no recourse but to suffer; the men above the bundle of rags, feeling the pinch but not yet reduced to rag bundles, have ways of protesting and remedying the evil, and Cooperation, Public Ownership, and social and industrial democracy are merely these ways.

But if you say to me, How does Cooperation or Municipal Trading or Public Ownership help the bundles of rags? I say to you: As yet they help not the least in the world; only the bundles of rags are the ultimate products of the conditions against which Cooperation and Municipal Trading are the first definite protests. And here at least is something; here are some of the conditions gone that drew the blood from the veins of this caterwauling creature and stripped him of the habiliments and similitude of a man. And at least it is something gained that the rest of the world is beginning to think a little about the squeezing of these people, whose ill-nourished bodies carry their chalky bones and tallowy faces about the purlieus of every great city. That is the only kind of democracy worth a moment's thought; the democracy that hails the bundle of rags as a brother and will not rest until he has an absolutely equal chance with every other man. And I think you will agree with me that, in the coldest and most practical view, it is infinitely more important to the interests of mankind that the world should have begun to take note of the squeezing even in the middle of the pile and should begin to arm itself against the Thing that squeezes, than that we should invent new car-couplers or dig the Panama Canal.

You have observed, if you followed these notes on the world's progress, how definitely and surely all we have seen works out toward one end—Rochdale, the English Communal Municipalities, old-age pensions and government operations by Continental countries, up to the advanced democracy and sane humanitarianism of Switzerland. We saw the government of Japan driven by the lesson of our own misfortunes to radical extremes that it might interpose between its common people and the elements that preyed upon them. We saw in the labor government of Australia men of advanced convictions struggling hard toward more democracy and against prejudice and vested interests. In New Zealand we saw something of the prosperity and peace and moral and physical health that are wrought for a nation that will not tolerate oppression. And India offered the huge object-lesson of what happens when government is seized exclusively by the fortunate and directed for their sole benefit.

And all this meant but one thing, that often without knowing it, often without thinking much about it, the whole world moves on toward a determination that greed must not prey upon need, that these people at the bottom of the pile must be dragged out of their state of misery, that wealth must no longer be allowed to have its own way and work its own will, that the race must no longer be cursed and civilization be denied and derided by the unspeakable horrors of the slums, that some way must be found to prevent mankind from falling into these frightful caverns of despair from the edges of which the kind-hearted drop down relief in capsules.

Always heretofore government has given the greatest share of its attention to those that least needed it: in old days to the nobles and the landowners, in our day to the corporations, to the rich and the powerful. From that distorted and lunatic view have come most of the miseries of mankind. Here are the signs around the world that henceforth government is to take first heed of the weak and the unfortunate and that the slum is to be far more an object of consideration than the palace, the money-market, or even the factory.

THE END.

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The Mere Incident of Failure

By WILL PAYNE

SOME years ago an able merchant in a small Iowa town found himself insolvent. His name was Ream. He ran a general store and sold farm implements. The concern was an extensive one for the place. But collections were slow. The merchant couldn't pay. Agents of the creditors flocked in, as usual, to look over the situation. It seemed tolerably discouraging to everybody except the bankrupt. He made a proposition —that if they would allow him $12 a week for living expenses, he would make the wreck pay out. Looking him over, they found him a large and exceedingly solid person, with a broad, mild face, very deliberate in speech and action—the kind of man who appears, to those of more excitable nerves, to tick about once a minute.

They accepted the proposition. Ream handled the assets and paid out. Then he went to Chicago. Being familiar with farm animals, he found employment at the stockyards. Later he turned his attention, deliberately, to wheat, and made a good deal of money. When the National Biscuit Company—injuriously known as the cracker trust —was floated, there was difficulty in raising the last two millions of the eight or nine required. After others had failed, Ream took the scheme in hand and went to New York. Noting his large, unhasting placidity, capitalists were impressed with the idea that the venture must be all right, and subscribed the needed millions.

At present he is a director and member of the finance committee of the United States Steel Corporation; director of half a dozen railroads; associate of J. P. Morgan. When his name is mentioned in Wall Street, people listen with the utmost respect. There is a general impression that if Ream is in it, it must be all right. His reputation for sound judgment is well above par. Once conditions happened to go wrong with him, and bankruptcy followed. But since he was all right himself, this little incident did not in the least prejudice his future success.

The Third National Bank of Chicago failed in 1877. Stockholders bitterly blamed President Pearce for tying up funds of the concern in a tract of vacant land out in the wilderness below Jackson Park. It was frightfully bad judgment. But all the value that President Pearce had expected soon actually accrued to that real estate. Prior to the World's Fair, the receiver was offered a price for the land, that, distributed among the stockholders of the defunct bank, would have given them $230 a share. Indeed, a share of stock representing an interest in this failure was worth more in the market than a proportionate interest in many solvent, going concerns. President Pearce's reputation for good judgment was looking up then. He advised holding out for a larger price, and the stockholders—many of them excellent business men, too—agreed with him. The golden moment slipped by in the night, and the land was recently sold at a price that will pay stockholders only about $70 a share. Very likely, by and by the land will be worth more than ever, and the purchaser will reap the reward in money and reputation. Or, some unknowable stream of development may depreciate it, and people will shake their heads over his poor business ability.

There is a general conspiracy to lie about business success. The newspapers, having roasted the rich citizen when alive, feel bound to say something flattering about him when dead. So in the obituary notices they make him out a kind of seer who pierced the future with unerring vision, and laid out his money accordingly. They endow him with infallible judgment and great imagination. Other wealthy citizens, nervously aware of the times, they missed going over by a hair's breadth and of the large part pure luck played in their success, fall in with this amiable fiction and give reminiscences of the deceased calculated to bolster up his prophetic character. Hence, very naturally, arises a popular fallacy that the man who fails must be only a second-class business man, since he

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obviously lacks the first-class business man's ability to foresee the future. Of course this is nonsense. Failure, especially in modern business, is a mere incident, and of itself proves nothing whatever concerning the ability of the bankrupt. Courage, not prescience, is what is chiefly needed to succeed. The best and safest business ability concerns itself exclusively with the thing immediately under its nose.

Thirty-five years ago it was very decidedly an open question with Marshall Field, then moneyless and discouraged, whether he should continue the enterprise in the subsequent conduct of which he laid the foundations of his great fortune, and of his unexcelled reputation for business ability. His firm had been cleaned out by the Chicago fire. To borrow the money necessary to carry it on seemed difficult, and the outlook doubtful. Persons who ought to know say that it was the junior partner, Mr. Leiter, rather than Mr. Field, who insisted upon going ahead. As a rule, or in many things—as subsequent developments showed—Field's judgment was better than Leiter's; but there seems to be little doubt that on this crucial point the man of poorer judgment, the less able business man, was right. And he was right simply because events that no man could foresee played into his hands.

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JOHN W. GATES IN HIS PRIVATE OFFICE.

Power to see the future has a certain place in business—an exceedingly humble one, however. It is employed professionally by some ladies and gentlemen at an average price of about a dollar a sitting. They can see things afar off, but not the landlord who is coming up the stairs to throw them out, nor the policeman who is coming around the corner to run them in. Prescience and clairvoyance have no place in the equipment of men who are able to make a living in less hazardous and persecuted callings.

There are plenty of infallible rules for success. Some men who have succeeded are rather fond of laying them down for the guidance of the young. But nobody—least of all their authors—ever infallibly succeeded by them. Foremost among the rules is thrift; yet anybody who thinks that thrift alone will carry a man to sure success has only to turn to a rather well-known instance to convince himself of the contrary.

One May afternoon twenty-two years ago Wall Street was harrowed by word that Russell Sage was "broke." The Street already had more sensations than it knew what to do with. A week before, Grant & Ward and the Marine Bank had failed, and a row of lesser houses had gone down like dominoes that a child stands on end and tips over. The Street held millions of Sage's paper. As early as eight o'clock the following morning the stairway to the eminent financier's modest office at 71 Broadway was jammed with anxious creditors. When the door opened there was a bargain-day rush for the cashier's wicket. Payments were made for a time, with exceeding deliberation; then they stopped. The door was shut in the face of the crowd. One excited creditor undertook to kick it down. A sergeant of police and four patrolmen were required to convince the applicant that money could not be extorted from Mr. Sage by physical violence. His obligations were sold on the Street for fifty cents on the dollar. To redeem them meant to face a present loss of $7,000,000. Could he find the money, and if he could, would he? It was what novelists call a psychological moment. Advised and assisted by Jay Gould, Mr. Sage did find the money and redeemed his obligations.

These obligations were technically known as "puts," which required him to take from the holders certain stocks at a certain price.

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The stocks had gone below the "put" price. They presently recovered, however, and Mr. Sage was richer than ever. At his death he left a fortune of seventy millions and a reputation for thrift and good judgment that was second to none, and that was abundantly justified. Yet he certainly hung over the brink that May day twenty-two years ago. And there is many and many a man, rich and admired to-day, who has had his panicky night when, like Sage, he debated whether he should "lie down." Perhaps the turn of a hair decided, and it was not nearly so much a question of business judgment as of the courage and optimism in his soul.

The flattering obituary notices and the stereotyped rules for big success are apt to lay much stress upon imagination as a necessary attribute—because, after the success is made, it stirs the imagination to think of its small beginnings. As a matter of fact, imagination is not what a man wants in order to make a fortune. On the other hand, it is a highly dangerous quality in business. The

Photograph by Gutekunst, Philadelphia.

JAY COOKE, WHO FAILED IN 1873, AND YET DIED RICH.

man who has it is decidedly more likely to go broke than to succeed.

The firm of Field, Leiter & Co. and the firm of John V. Farwell & Co. sprang from the same stem, and for years ran about neck and neck. In the early eighties Marshall Field was putting his surplus money in the thing nearest at hand—that is, into real estate in the heart of Chicago, lots upon the value of which the enormous wealth-producing power of the whole West subsequently operated. Merely as an example, one bit with fifty feet of State Street frontage that he bought for $197,000 is now worth $1,500,000. Another bit now brings in the purchase price every year in net rentals. About the same time the Messrs. Farwell were putting their surplus money into a really imperial enterprise in Texas. In consideration of building the State capitol they received three million acres of land. There was something to strike the imagination—an empire in the great Southwest. But somehow the unknowable stream of development did not flow right. It is only in the last few years that the Texas lands have been profitably salable. The Farwell house is now a big concern, and its members are rich men; but who can say how great an element of purest chance there is in the difference between their comparatively modest fortunes and the hundred and fifty millions or so that Marshall Field left? I doubt very much if Mr. Field ever imagined anything about business. Some persons who sold him real estate twenty years ago for a tenth of its present value were very able business men too. Neither he nor they could tell that fortune was going to favor the real estate so tremendously.

Nobody gifted with a sense of humor can fail to be diverted by the Puck-like manner in which luck makes and unmakes reputations for business ability. A score of years ago a gentleman named Jennings was an extensive owner of down-town real estate in Chicago. He was the first, I believe, to develop on a large scale the modern system of the ninety-nine-year lease—whereby the owner insures to himself and his heirs for a century an absolutely fixed rental, free and clear of all charges. After Mr. Jennings had leased a lot of his lands for ninety-nine years, a depression came on. Other people's incomes were curtailed; but his was stable. "What foresight!" said the town. "What sagacity! What superb business judgment!" Mr. Jennings's views on the business situation and outlook were eagerly sought. The depression passed; realty prices advanced immensely; the Jennings lots could have been leased at twice the rental named in the old indentures. The town shook its head sym-

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pathetically over poor Mr. Jennings's deplorable short-sightedness.

Did you ever hear of Asa Whitney? He was a wealthy New York merchant, but fatally gifted with an imagination. He dreamed a railroad to connect the Great Lakes with the Pacific coast, and spent his energy and fortune in promoting the scheme before Congress and elsewhere. It is related that this dreamer of the Union Pacific made a livelihood in his late years by selling milk in Washington. After him came Oakes Ames, a rich manufacturer, and a more powerful dreamer. He, more than anybody else, built the Union Pacific, spending his money, his health, and his reputation in doing it. Some years after he died in disgrace the Massachusetts legislature paid a glowing tribute to his memory, and the great road, enhancing in value, recuperated the family fortunes. Whitney and Ames were successes if the Union Pacific is a success—and it recently dazzled Wall Street by boosting the dividend on the common stock to ten per cent.—but not successes in the business sense.

THE LATE RUSSELL SAGE, WHO FAILED TWENTY-TWO YEARS AGO AND WHOSE ESTATE IS NOW VALUED AT $70,000,000.

Northern Pacific is one of the great railroad successes of the country. Its capital stock—a bit waterish—is now valued in the market at upward of $300,000,000. Yet the two great builders of the road, Jay Cooke and Henry Villard, both went broke in the operation. And both recovered their fortunes and died rich. The going broke was a mere incident.

Jay Cooke failed in 1873. His project was sound enough; but the country was then at the edge of a panic—one of those sudden and extensive collapses that nobody exactly foresees, although there are persons who are always predicting a panic and who, when one does happen, neatly crown themselves as prophets. After Cooke's failure, Villard secured control of the road and presently completed it to the coast. Not very long before, Villard had been a newspaper reporter, none too sure of a job.

He was born in Bavaria, and his real name was Heinrich Hilgard. Along in the fifties he was writing little letters to the German press from Illinois. In 1858 he reported the Lincoln-Douglas debates; afterward he was correspondent at Washington and in the field during the war. After the war he made three trips to Germany. He had capital—indestructible and inexhaustible capital—but it wasn't in money. It was in his power to impress men; to inspire confidence. He put this capital in operation in the fatherland, and in 1871 returned thence as the accredited representative of German holders of bonds of the Oregon & California Railroad, now an inconsiderable bit of the Southern Pacific system. That was the beginning, as business men reckon such things. Aided by

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ANDREW CARNEGIE'S PRIVATE LIBRARY IN HIS NEW YORK HOME.

more German money and by a blind pool that in its day was the wonder of the Street, he stepped into the saddle of Northern Pacific.

The grand junket that he conducted in 1883 to witness the driving of the final golden spike is still spoken of with much respect by veteran financiers and gourmands. It is said to have cost $200,000. But while Villard was completing his railroad the times were getting bad again. There was nothing wrong with the railroad; but the tide of business, which is about as uncontrollable by man as the tide of the sea, was on the ebb. Not long after he returned from the grand junket Villard probably wished he had that golden spike back, to use as collateral. At the end of the year he was insolvent. Newspaper head-lines of January 5, 1884, said "Villard is Ruined." He had just finished a fine house in New York. This, together with all other property in his possession, he handed over to his creditors—an incident so common that it is idle to inquire who owns any particular fine house that takes one's eye. A man built it saying to himself, "I will possess it and take my ease in it." But the wheel turns; up bobs a stranger and says, "Excuse me; I'll take it," and moves in. The house stands, however. Entirely selfish gentlemen have built rows of mansions, thousands of miles of railroads, many mills and shops, with the egoistic idea that they were going to own them, and then found that they were merely building for somebody else. They might almost as well have been socialists, although it always irritates them for one to say so.

Villard, in fact, was worse than insolvent. He was bankrupt in health, too. His letter resigning the presidency of Northern Pacific said: "I am suffering from nervous prostration, which renders me no longer able to perform my official duties." People who saw him at that time remember his broken condition. The Street said adieu to him. He went back to Germany. Many months passed and nothing was heard from him. But over in Germany he was recovering what was, in fact, his truly valuable capital—that is, his nerve. With men like Villard, men

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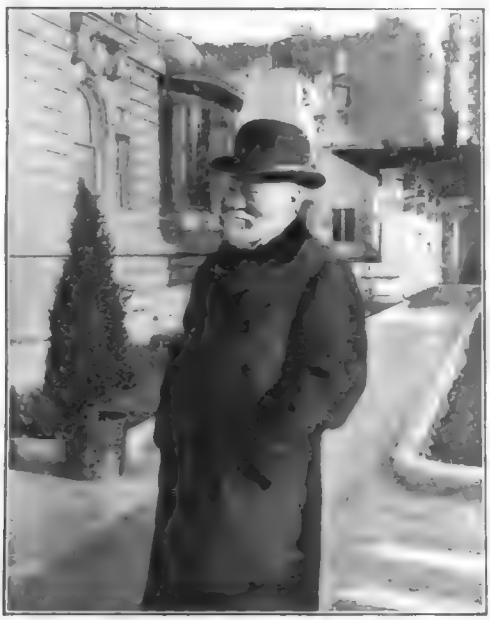
of real power and ability, the money doesn't matter. That is simply the bow with which they play upon other men. A fine fiddler doesn't go out of business because a bow is broken. He will get another if he retains his ability to play. With the Villard instrumentalists the ability to play lies in their nerve—or call it their courage, or their gift of dominating.

Three years after the failure Villard had another bow. A German syndicate supplied him with $6,000,000 to buy Oregon Navigation securities. He was then reelected a director of Northern Pacific and soon was once more the controlling genius of the great road. Times were good then, but they didn't stay so very long.

Three years after Villard's return the surface of the financial sea began to show strange and disturbing signs of some deep-water commotion. Money in Europe was extraordinarily dear. The Bank of England advanced its discount rate to six per cent. Nobody knew what it meant, but it evidently



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ANDREW CARNEGIE IN THE ITALIAN GARDEN BESIDE HIS NEW YORK PALACE.

didn't mean any good; so stocks—which so often act first and let the reason be discovered later—promptly began going to pot. There was quite a panic on Monday, November 10th (this was in 1890). About noon James S. Struthers, who was standing in the St. Paul crowd on the floor of the Exchange, dropped dead. Of course, there was absolutely no logical connection; but this tragedy amid the excited brokers increased the panic. The market value of the Sugar Trust and of railroads beyond the Missouri River declined millions of dollars because an estimable gentleman happened to die of heart disease in a certain spot on Manhattan Island. If he had died a mile away, Northern Pacific might have closed some dollars per share higher that day, and—possibly—a big house might have been saved. The next day there was enormous liquidation, bearing Northern Pacific down to $17 a share for the common stock and $55 for the preferred; and in the last hour of business, Decker, Howell & Co. went to the wall. They were Henry Villard's brokers, and their liabilities exceeded $10,000,000. "Well, well! Villard's busted again," said the Street.

It did not have long to think about it, however. Only four days. Then that deep-water trouble came to the surface—a vast wreck. The great English house of Baring Brothers went into liquidation with liabilities of $100,000,000—truly a sizable smash. The Bank of England put its discount rate to eight per cent. Also it borrowed £3,000,000 gold from the Bank of France and £1,500,000 from the Imperial Bank of Russia. With the Rothschilds, it took charge of Baring Brothers' assets and advanced £15,000,000 to meet the immediate obligations of the insolvent house. The government offered to suspend the Bank's charter, thereby enabling it to issue circulating notes without limit—in short to put out "fiat" money, which is a very dishonest and abominable thing for any one to propose in cold blood. The governors of the Bank, however, had the courage to decline the offer.

When things of this kind were doing, it is no wonder that call money in New York rose to 186 per cent., while stocks went as fast in the opposite direction; nor that men of first-rate ability were unable to keep their feet. The New York banks, having no paternal government to help them with charter suspensions, resorted to the device of issuing clearing-house certificates—that is, of paying their debts to one another with stage currency. The Villard stocks were twenty, thirty, even forty points off.

The Baring house was over a hundred years old, and the greatest of its kind in the world. It had performed such feats as re-

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organizing Egypt and guaranteeing her debts, or certain of them. It had gone very heavily into Argentine and was carrying such items as £5,000,000 water and drainage loans in that republic. The house was arranging to bring out a new, consolidated Argentine loan —something in eight or nine figures—when a most inopportune South American revolution broke out in Buenos Ayres. Otherwise the loan might have been successfully floated.

People said this was another South Sea bubble; that the reams of Argentine paper into which the house had put so many million pounds would finally be sold to the ragman. But Argentina was really rich; the Barings were really able men. The house reorganized, and is opulent now. So with Villard. His losses were staggering; but his railroad had immense earning power. There was no error in his judgment of it. Only that unforeseeable tangle of the Barings, with their vast liabilities, and the unseasonable hitch of a revolution, had come in and upset him for the moment. He hung on to his equities, pulled out, and died rich. If he had happened to die in 1884 he would have been put down as a failure.

Photograph by Pirie MacDonald, New York.
THEODORE H. PRICE, WHO WON OUT AFTER A FAILURE OF $13,000,000.

At the time of the Baring collapse Mr. Charles Francis Adams, of Boston, was president of Union Pacific. One result of the terrific smash in stocks at New York—proximately due to the inopportune revolution in Argentina, which touched off the Baring failure—was to enable Jay Gould to shake the "Harvard crowd," as he derisively styled them, out of Union Pacific and take over the road himself. Not even a Harvard man could have foretold that.

Business is mostly done by corporations. Its liability to the incident of failure is so thoroughly recognized that the machinery is always kept oiled and ready to put the corporation through bankruptcy, reorganize it, set it on its legs, and start it going again.

You may be exactly right in your judgment of the particular proposition that engages your attention, and yet fail because the flux of numberless and often inscrutable causes that play upon business turns against you. Theodore H. Price was decidedly right about cotton in 1900. He said it was too low. It stood at nine and a half cents a pound when his firm failed with liabilities of $13,000,000. The failure did not disturb Mr. Price, however. It did not change his opinion that cotton was too low. He raised some more money—partly, it is said, by writing life-insurance—and tried again. Soon after the failure cotton was up to eleven cents and Mr. Price was rich again. Simply being right in your judgment of a particular proposition counts for as little as being wrong in your judgment of it. Wheat at sixty cents a bushel in Chicago is too low. Anybody can see that, because it does not repay the cost of production. Thousands did see it along in 1894 and 1895. For months every time the ticker ticked little groups of men went over like tenpins hit by a ball. For while wheat was obviously too low, it wouldn't go up. Not that there was any overproduction, nor that consumption was less, nor that there was any lack of money to carry the stocks of grain; but just because the country had the blues. That is illogical; but it counted quite as much as though it had come out of Kant's "Pure Reason."

There is no such thing as a single, particular proposition in business. No doubt this was always true in a measure; but it becomes more inclusively, more vitally, true every day, with the increasing coordination of business. The whole business web knits ever closer, and each particular concern is bound more tightly in it. What other people do reacts more quickly than formerly upon your own affairs. A martial blast sounded in Buenos Ayres blew some very peaceful Boston gentlemen out of Union Pacific. Stockholders in Kansas banks got better dividends because some Russian grand dukes wanted war with Japan. The peculiar operations of the ducal

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brain-cells made wheat higher. Who will pretend that he can reason out what a grand duke is going to do?

Andrew Carnegie, deliberating between peace and war, finally decided upon peace—with honor and $300,000,000 in prior lien bonds. He had planned a big competitive fight. He had the men and the money and the good "By Jingo" spirit to carry it on. However, he concluded to sell; whereupon the United States Steel Corporation was formed, and conditions affecting a world of industries based on iron became different from what they had been—still more different from what they would have been if Mr. Carnegie had decided not to sell.

And to go a little behind the returns: the grand dukes didn't know whether they were going to have their war; Carnegie didn't know whether he was going to sell or fight. When their own minds were made up, the issue still depended upon what certain other persons did. The forces that play upon business are too vast and complicated for any mortal to grasp. No doubt there is a law in them, but its arc sweeps far beyond merely human ken. When John W. Gates says that all he asks is to be right in fifty-one cases out of a hundred, he indicates the common experience. To succeed in business is not in the least to know what to-morrow's conditions are going to be. If it were, there would be no successes, for nobody can do that. It is to see the condition as it actually arises and to move with it courageously. Sometimes you can't move fast enough. Your foot is caught in the frog. Then the incident of failure occurs. In the case of a good business man that means simply that this particular one of the forty-odd times when he was wrong happened to be especially important. His actual business ability may be vastly superior to that of a host of men who never failed.

WILLIAM H. MOORE, A RICH CHICAGO BANKER WHO FAILED FOR $10,000,000 IN 1896.

Cyrus H. McCormick, inventor of the reaper and founder of a great fortune, was admittedly a tip-top business man. He failed, however, early in his career. He had already taken out the patent for the reaper—a document that was subsequently to be worth many millions of dollars. Yet he failed for a sum so small that I should blush to mention it—which suggests how little you can do with the future in to-day's balance-sheet. The trick is to catch conditions as they rise; to act upon them with courage and the best intelligence you can muster—and to trust the rest to luck. Probably the less you are encumbered with preconceived ideas based on old conditions, the better show you will have to succeed. Many grave editorial mentors made much of an alleged rule of Marshall Field's never to give a note or to go in debt. If he had had such a rule in 1871 and stuck to it, he would have had to go out of business and stay out.

To keep out of jail is an excellent rule—generally speaking. Yet it is by no means essential to a conspicuous business success. Charles T. Yerkes served a prison term in Pennsylvania, besides going very much broke. He went to Chicago some twenty-five years ago, with no money to speak of, but with an inestimable capital in pure nerve. That was sufficient. He soon dominated the town. It is curious now to ride by the dingy old brick building with a clock-tower at 444 North Clark Street, Yerkes's old headquarters, and remember how, for fifteen years, Chicago kept an anxious and rather bulging eye upon it, a good deal as the timid and nervous burghers of a medieval town watched the overawing baronial stronghold. Yerkes induced some rich Philadelphians to help him to the money to buy control of the street railways on the North and West sides. Usual traction proceedings followed: collateral trust bonds were issued against the purchased stocks, and sold—enabling Yerkes to get back all the money he put in, while he still kept control of the properties; then paper con-

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struction companies and operating companies were formed, with contracts and leases from one to another, all dictated by Yerkes and highly profitable to him.

Presently Mr. Yerkes caused his old companies to borrow money and guarantee bonds for the purpose of buying and building a fine system of trolley roads through the suburbs. Presently, also, arose a question of the policy to be pursued by the trolley roads. Directors of the old companies suggested that, of course, the trolley roads belonged to the said old companies, which had furnished all the money to buy and build them. "That," said Mr. Yerkes, "is an error. The trolley roads belong to me personally."

The directors looked crestfallen. When they got far enough away from 444 North Clark Street so that they were sure they wouldn't be overheard, they said—privately, among themselves—that it was too bad. Some leading citizens whom Yerkes had permitted to buy stock, heavily watered, in the old companies, thought it was a shame. The old companies had built the trolley roads—hence, they argued, the companies should own them. But they carried no such flimsy arguments up to 444 North Clark Street. Up there Mr. Yerkes had said, "I own the trolley roads"; hence he did own them.

What should the trivial incident of losing his money matter to such a man as that? If he had no money of his own he could always order other people to hand over theirs. Nobody can exactly explain it, but there was something in his will that beat down other wills. He was a remarkably handsome man, deep-chested, with commanding dark eyes and a colorless face. When he came into a room, men of ordinary caliber seemed to fade helplessly away.

Following good traction precedent he was always manipulating his own stocks on the Exchange. In the troublous times of 1896 he got caught with so long a line on so seriously falling a market that he was actually broke. He could not meet his obligations. His creditors appointed a meeting. What would happen at that meeting was described to me by creditors in advance. The law was going to be laid down to Yerkes. Creditors were going to take affairs in hand. He must raise a certain amount of money within a certain time and give certain pledges of proper behavior. That was what was going to happen. Alas, how little any of us can foretell the future! The meeting was held. Yerkes did not attend it—merely sent his lawyer with a memorandum to the general effect that he would give creditors some dubious debentures to the amount of about fifteen per cent. of their claims and pay them some money later on. He had his way about it.

He owned about one-quarter of the capital stock of the street-railway companies. The franchises were expiring and he could not get them renewed. So he decided to sell his stock to a crowd of the shrewdest traction men in New York and Philadelphia. No gold brick was ever transferred to an innocent granger with greater ease or with more grievous results to the purchaser. Yerkes got $10,000,000. The buyers got practically nothing but sorrow. Before somebody spilled a drop of acid on the brick and showed what it was made of, the buyers proposed to form a new paper company of their own that should lease the old companies. The very object of the lease, as everybody knew, was to enable Yerkes to sell his own one-quarter interest. Yet owners of the other three-quarters interest meekly permitted Yerkes to draw up this lease to suit himself and they blindly sanctioned it—afterward discovering that it was not at all what they had supposed it to be. These were first-rate business men, too, you understand. Having sold his Chicago properties, and being upward of sixty, Mr. Yerkes went over to London, leaving a general roar of execration in his wake. There he addressed himself to the little task of consolidating and greatly extending London's underground system. He largely completed this before his death.

He was a fine type of the successful, predatory financier. He had imagination. That is, he always imagined himself living like a medieval prince—and he took whatever was needful to make the dream true. As to the future, he knew just one thing—that he would always find plenty of men whom he could dominate and make do as he pleased. That was all he needed to know. His judgment on other things, as a matter of fact, was generally very bad. But what difference did that make? A financial failure still left him with the indomitable nerve that would get what he needed. He once said, "I'm a good loser. To see a fortune slip through my fingers chagrins me—that's all."

To an able man failure doesn't matter. Wise and experienced persons know it. When William H. and James H. Moore failed in 1896, their account balanced about like this:

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"Liabilities, $10,000,000; assets, $00,000,001." Some creditors looked at the balance-sheet and clamored; talked about law and attachments and so on. Others looked at the clear-eyed, urbane, nervy debtors, and just wiped the slate—canceled the indebtedness out of hand; made the debtors a Christmas present of it. These latter the Moores let into their subsequent great iron and railroad deals and made them profits that amply compensated for the canceled debts.

Probably sheer courage is more important than anything else. Knowing the rules, as deduced from experience, doesn't help much. Ten years ago the Illinois National Bank failed calamitously, its back broken by carrying an unwieldy street railroad. The clearing-house committee sat upon it one night just before Christmas; decided that it had sinned and must die. John R. Walsh was a member of that committee. He laid down the rule very clearly: A bank that tied up its assets in promoting a street railroad had no right to exist. For twenty years Walsh's name was synonymous with soundest, most conservative business judgment. Then the clearing-house committee had to sit upon him. It found that he had tied up the assets of his bank in promoting a steam railroad. He had been doing precisely the thing that he had so clearly seen to be inevitably disastrous when the Illinois National did it ten years before—only doing it on a larger scale.

His bank failed, with an attendant avalanche of disgrace. In the afternoon of the exciting day of the failure a gray fellow banker was asked as to the outlook. "I believe Walsh will pull out," he said. "I've just seen him. He hasn't lost a particle of his courage." You see, he wasn't looking at the statement of assets and liabilities, but into the eye of the man.

The Searchlight

By NANNIE BYRD TURNER

THE night is a living thing,
Sinister, soulless, black;
It has shut the eyes of the friendly skies
And driven the twilight back.
It has baffled the peering land
And swallowed the groping sail,
And lost the line of the shore's define
In the river's troubled trail.

Swift as a smiting sword
The long light cleaves the dark,
Now laying bare the stricken air,
Now wheeling arc on arc;
A space the heavens are lit,
The waters stare, a space—
A moment free, looks suddenly
The cliff's astonished face.

Far in the north a cloud,
Near in the south a sail,
Revealed and lost a shrinking coast
Where sullen tides prevail;
Questioned from pole to pole
The sky-line answers plain.
Sheathe the good light!—And monster night
Fondles its prey again.

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The Cry of the Slums

A SERIES OF PICTURES BY BESSIE MARSH

With Comments by CHARLES EDWARD RUSSELL

A WOMAN, who was also an artist, started one day on a tour of the real New York to see with her own eyes and note for her own satisfaction the glories of our prosperity and the triumphs of our civilization.

She saw them. Anybody can see them that will take the trouble to look. You do not see them—comfortable, well-fed, easy-going American, celebrating Christmas in your pleasant home—because habitually you go through the world with your eyes turned upon yourself, and habitually you surrender your intelligence to your newspaper, instead of using it to do your own thinking. But this woman could see and she could think. She saw things and knew what they meant, and as she observed she made pictures of exactly what she saw.

In one place she saw an eviction: she saw, on a December day, a shivering family thrown into the street and the sticks and rags of their furniture thrown after them; and she saw these persons sit on their wretched possessions without a place in the world to go to, while the wind whipped their rags about them, and the cold made the children cry.

And in a garret, just under the eaves, she saw a woman who had been left alone in the world and who earned a trifle of bread by stitching things for you and me to wear; and want and misery and suffering had warped the mind that should have been full and strong and aspiring, until it was dark and dusty, like the hole wherein she abode and stitched things for you and me.

And she saw a human being brought into the world in a stinking room in a stinking rear tenement, where the mother, who two days before had been on her knees scrubbing an office floor and three days afterward would be there again—she saw that woman lying on a filthy bed, in a filthy room, with filthy people about her, and the new and unwelcome and cursed baby squalling on her breast; and that filthy room was the home of six persons.

And she saw (for this was in the Christmas season) a group of children

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that had made their own Christmas tree, because they knew that they would have none other. They had set up a bit of tree-limb they had dragged from a place where a house was demolished, and on that they had hung old bottles and tomato-cans from the garbage. And they made a doll of a bit of rag and a piece of string, and in the rotten dive wherein they lived they were playing that this was a real Christmas tree, and that these rags and tomato-cans were real presents.

And she saw in another rotten dive a place where a woman lived in one room with a bit of window in the roof. And the woman had a little girl, and the little girl somehow knew something about Christmas, and had hung up her stocking on the gas-burner, and crept into the one bed; and there would be nothing in the stocking the next morning, because the woman had nothing to put into it.

She saw all these things, and she made pictures of them just as she saw them, and here they are for you to see. Sweet to look upon —are they not?—and calculated to cheer us and show us the real beauties of the social conditions in which we live and which we never tire of praising.

And she saw more. She saw people in dwellings unfit for beasts, breathing poisonous air, herding in the dark and damp. She saw the children there; she saw how with surpassing wisdom we establish the conditions that make crime certain and then spend of our substance to punish the criminals. She got a glimpse of the vast underworld, where millions upon millions live, wretchedly camped upon the starvation-line —or beyond it. And she saw the crux of our situation, the heart of the whole matter, the place where disaster is manufactured for the nations. For now we are beginning to learn that we cannot sow slums without reaping epidemics, that we cannot have masses of people dwelling in cellars and attics without breeding national weakness, that some time for us or for our children there will have to be an accounting for every rotten tenement, every foul alley, every reeking court, every life without light. "As ye have done it unto the least of these." Good words, my masters. At ease before the Christmas fire, look at these pictures and reflect that for all these things not the ways of Providence are responsible, nor inevitable conditions, nor the other vain imaginings wherewith we salve our consciences, but merely you and I.

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SHE SAW A SHIVERING FAMILY THROWN INTO THE STREET AND THE STICKS AND RAGS OF THEIR FURNITURE THROWN AFTER THEM.

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SHE SAW A WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN LEFT ALONE IN THE WORLD STITCHING THINGS FOR YOU AND ME TO WEAR.

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SHE SAW A HUMAN BEING BROUGHT INTO THE WORLD IN A STINKING ROOM THAT WAS THE HOME OF SIX PERSONS.

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SHE SAW IN A ROTTEN DIVE CHILDREN PLAYING THAT THESE RAGS AND TOMATO-CANS WERE REAL CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

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SHE SAW . . . THERE WOULD BE NOTHING IN THE STOCKING THE NEXT MORNING BECAUSE THE WOMAN HAD NOTHING TO PUT INTO IT.

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Friday, the 13th

By THOMAS W. LAWSON

Illustrations by T. K. Hanna

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALMENT.—Jim Randolph, head of the great banking-house of Randolph & Randolph, and his closest friend, Bob Brownley, a stock-broker who represents the house on the floor of the Exchange, are about to set out for a yachting holiday when Beulah Sands, a beautiful Virginia girl, appears at the office. Her father, Judge Lee Sands, a distinguished Virginia gentleman, is threatened with ruin and disgrace through the operations of a clique of financial wreckers belonging to the "System." In the hope of recouping the family fortune by stock-market speculation, Beulah Sands has come to New York and she brings to Brownley a letter of introduction from her father asking his assistance in the rash undertaking. Brownley, deeply impressed by the girl's beauty and courage, secures her a place in Randolph & Randolph's offices, and takes charge of her account. For her benefit he plans a great coup in Sugar and by masterly tactics at the Exchange makes for her nearly two millions profit. At the moment when success seems to have been achieved, Brownley leaves the floor to carry the good news to Miss Sands. While she is thanking him, Brownley's telephone rings sharply.

CHAPTER III (*Continued*)

HE listened a moment, then answered, "Stand on it at 80 for 12,000 shares. I will be there in a second." He dropped the receiver. "Jim, we have struck a snag. Arthur Perkins, whom I left on guard at the pole, says Barry Conant has just jumped in and supplied all the bids. He has it down to 81, and is offering it in 5,000 blocks and is aggressive. I must get there quick," and he shot out of the office.

I sprang for Bob's telephone: "Perkins, quick!" "What are they doing, Perkins?" I asked a second later.

"Conant has almost filled me up. He seems to have a hogshead of it on tap," he answered.

"Buy 50,000 shares, 5,000 each point down; and anything unfilled, give to Bob when he gets there. He is on the way."

I shut off, and turned to Miss Sands:

"This is no time to stand on ceremony, Miss Sands. Barry Conant is Camemeyer's and 'Standard Oil's' head broker. His being on the floor means mischief. He never goes into a big whirl personally unless they are out for blood. Bob has exhausted his buying power, and though I tell you frankly that I never speculate, don't believe in speculation and am in this deal only for Bob—and for you—I swear I don't intend to let them wipe the floor with him without at least making them swallow some of the dust they kick up. Please don't object to my helping out, Miss Sands. Ordinarily I would defer to your wishes, but I love Bob Brownley only second to my wife, and I have money enough to warrant a plunge in stock. If they should turn Bob over in this deal, he—well, they're not going to, if I can prevent it," and I started for the Exchange on the run.

When I got there the scene beggared description. That of the morning was tame in comparison. A bull market, however terrific, always is tame beside a bear crash. In the few moments it took me to get to the floor, the battle had started. The entire Exchange was in a dense mob wedged against the rail behind the Sugar-pole. I could not have got within yards of the center of that crowd of men, fast becoming panic-stricken, if the fate of nations had depended on my errand. I had witnessed such a scene before. It represented a certain phase of Stock-Exchange-gambling procedure, where one man apparently has every other man on the floor against him. I understood: Bob against them all—he trying to stay the onrushing current of dropping prices; they bent on keeping the sluice-gates open. He was backed up against the rail—not the Bob of the morning; not a vestige of that cold, brain-nerve-and-body-in-hand gambler remained. His hat was gone, his collar torn and hanging over his shoulder. His coat and waistcoat were ripped open, showing the full length of his white shirt-front, and his eyes were fairly mad. Bob was no longer a human being, but a monarch of the forests at bay, with the

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hunter in front of him, and closing in upon him, in a great half-circle, the pack of harriers, all gnashing their teeth, baring their fangs, and howling for blood. The hunter, directly facing Bob, was Barry Conant—very slight, very short, a marvelously compact, handsome, miniature man, with a fascinating face, dark olive in tint, lighted by a pair of sparkling black eyes and framed in jet-black hair; a black mustache was parted over white teeth, which, when he was stalking his game, looked like those of a wolf. An interesting man at all times was this Barry Conant, and he had been on more and fiercer battle-fields than any other half-score members combined. The scene was a rare one for a student of animalized men.

While every other man in the crowd was at a high tension of excitement, Barry Conant was as calm as though standing in the center of a ten-acre daisy-field cutting off the helpless flowers' heads with every swing of his arm. Switching stock-gamblers into eternity had grown to be a pastime to Barry Conant. Here was Bob thundering with terrific emphasis "78 for 5,000," "77 for 5,000," "75 for 5,000," "74 for 5,000," "73 for 5,000," "72 for 5,000," seemingly expecting through sheer power of voice to crush his opponent into silence. But with the regularity of a trip-hammer Barry Conant's right hand, raised in unhurried gesture, and his clear, calm "Sold" met Bob's every retreating bid. It was a battle royal—a king on one side, a Richelieu on the other. Though there was frantic buying and selling all around these two generals, the trading was gaged by the trend of their battle. All knew that if Bob should be beaten down by this concentrated modern finance devil, a panic would ensue and Sugar would go none could say how low. But if Bob should play him to a standstill by exhausting his selling power, Sugar would quickly soar to even higher figures than before. It was known that Barry Conant's usual order for such an occasion as the present was "Break the price at any cost." On the other hand, every one knew that Randolph & Randolph were usually behind Bob's big commissions; this was evidently one of his biggest; and every man there knew that Randolph & Randolph were seldom backed down by any force.

As Bob made his bid "72 for 5,000," and got it, I saw a quick flash of pain shoot across his face, and realized that it probably meant he was nearing the end of my last order. I sized it up that there was deviltry of more than usual significance behind this selling movement; that Barry Conant must have unlimited orders to sell and smash. My final order of fifty thousand brought our total up to one hundred and fifty thousand shares, a large amount for even Randolph & Randolph to buy of a stock selling at nearly $200 a share. I then and there decided that whatever happened I would go no further. Just then Bob's wild eye caught mine, and there was in it a piteous appeal, such an appeal as one sees in the eye of the wounded doe when she gives up her attempt to swim to shore and waits the coming of the pursuing hunter's canoe. I sadly signaled that I was through. As Bob caught the sign, he threw his head back and bellowed a deep, hoarse "70 for 10,000." I knew then that he had already bought forty thousand, and that this was the last-ditch stand. Barry Conant must have caught the meaning, too. Instantly, like a revolver report, came his "Sold!" Then the compact, miniature mass of human springs and wires, which had until now been held in perfect control, suddenly burst from its clamps, and Barry Conant was the fiend his Wall Street reputation pictured him. His five feet five inches seemed to loom to the height of a giant. His arms, with their fate-pointing fingers, rose and fell with bewildering rapidity as his piercing voice rang out—"5,000 at 69, 68, 65," "10,000 at 63," "25,000 at 60." Pandemonium reigned. Every man in the crowd seemed to have the capital stock of the Sugar Trust to sell, and at any price. A score seemed to be bent on selling as low as possible instead of for as much as they could get. These were the shorts who had been punished the day before by Bob's uplift.

Poor Bob, he was forgotten! An instant after he made his last effort he was the dead cock in the pit. Frenzied gamblers of the Stock Exchange have no more use for the dead cocks than have Mexicans for the real birds when they get the fatal gaff. The day after the contest, or even that same night, at Delmonico's and the clubs, these men would moan for poor Bob; Barry Conant's moan would be the loudest of them all, and, what is more, it would be sincere. But on battle day away to the dump with the fallen bird, the bird that could not win! I saw a look of deep, terrible agony spread over Bob's face; and then in a flash he was the Bob Brownley who I always boasted had the cour-

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age and the brain to do the right thing in all circumstances. To the astonishment of every man in the crowd he let loose one wild yell, a cross between the war-whoop of an Indian and the bay of a deep-lunged hound regaining a lost scent. Then he began to throw over Sugar stock, right and left, in big and little amounts. He slaughtered the price, undercutting Barry Conant's every offer and filling every bid. For twenty minutes he was a madman, then he stopped. Sugar was falling rapidly to the price it finally reached, 90, and the panic was in full swing, but panics seemed now to have no interest for Bob. He pushed his way through the crowd and, joining me, said: "Jim, forgive me. I have dragged you into an enormous loss, have ruined Beulah Sands, her father, and myself. I think at the last moment I did the only thing possible. I threw over the 150,000 shares and so cut off some of our loss. Let us go to the office and see where we stand." He was strangely, unnaturally calm after that heart-crushing, nerve-tearing day. I tried to tell him how I admired his cool nerve and pluck in about-facing and doing the only thing there was left to do; to tell him that required more real courage and level-headedness than all the rest of the day's doings; but he stopped me:

"Jim, don't talk of me. My conceit is gone. I have learned my lesson to-day. My plans were all right, and sound, but poor fool that I was, I did not take into consideration the loaded dice of the master thieves. I knew what they could do, have seen them scores of times, as you have, at their slaughter; seen them crush out the hearts of other men just as good as you or I; seen them take them out and skin and quarter-slice them, unmindful of the agony of those who were dear to and dependent on their owners, but it never seemed hard. It was not my heart, and somehow I looked at it as a part of the game and let it go at that. To-day I know what it means to be put on the chopping-block of the 'System' butchers. I know what it is to see my heart and the heart of one I love and yours, too, Jim, systematically skewered to those of the hundreds and thousands of victims who have gone before. Jim, we must be three millions losers, and the men who have our money have so many, many millions that they can't live long enough even to thumb it over. Men who will use our money on the gambling-table, at the race-tracks, squander it on stage harlots, or in turning their wives and daughters or their neighbors' wives and daughters into worse than stage harlots. Men, Jim, who are not fit, measured by any standard of decency, to walk the same earth as you and Judge Sands. Men whose painted pets pollute the very air that such as Beulah Sands must breathe. I've learned my lesson to-day. I thought I knew the whole game of finance, but I'm suddenly awakened to a realization of the dense ignorance I wallowed in. Jim, but for the loading of the dice, I should now have been taking Beulah Sands to her father with the money that the hellish 'System' stole from him. Later I should have taken her to the altar, and after, who knows but that I should have had the happiest home and family in all the world, and lived as her people and mine have lived for generations, honest, God-fearing, law-abiding, neighbor-loving men and women, and then died as men should die? But now, Jim, I see a black, awful picture. No, I'm not morbid, I'm going to make a heroic effort to put the picture out of sight; but I'm afraid, Jim, I'm afraid."

He stopped as we pulled up on the sidewalk in front of Randolph & Randolph's office. "Here it is on the bulletin. See what did the trick, Jim. They held the Sugar meeting last night instead of waiting till to-morrow, and cut the dividend instead of increasing it. The world won't know it until to-morrow. Then they will know it, then they will know it. They will read it in the headlines of the papers—a few suicides, a few defaulters, a few new convicts, an unclaimed corpse or two at the morgue; a few innocent girls, whose fathers' fortunes have gone to swell Camemeyer's and 'Standard Oil's' already uncountable gold, turned into street-walkers; a few new palaces on Fifth Avenue, and a few new libraries given to communities that formerly took pride in building them from their honestly earned savings. A report or two of record-breaking diamond sales by Tiffany to the kings and czars of dollar royalty, then front-page news stories of clawing, mauling, and hair-pulling wrangles among the stage harlots for the possession of these diamonds. They were not quite sure that the dividend cut alone would do the trick, and they were taking no chances, these mighty warriors of the 'System,' so their hireling Senate committee held a session last night and unanimously reported to put sugar on the free list. The people will read that in the morning, and probably the day after they'll be told that

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the committee held another session to-night and unanimously reported to take it off the free list. By that time these honorable statesmen will have loaded up with the stock that you and I and Beulah Sands sold, and that other poor devils will slaughter to-morrow after reading their morning papers."

Bob's bitterness was terrible. My heart was torn as I listened. He stalked through the office and into that of Beulah Sands. I followed. She was at her desk, and when she looked up, her great eyes opened in wonderment as they took in Bob, his grim, set face, the defiant, sullen desperation of the big brown eyes, the disheveled hair and clothes. For an instant she stood as one who had seen an apparition.

"Look me over, Beulah Sands," he said, "look me over to your heart's content, for you may never again see the fool of fools in all the world, the fool who thought himself competent to cope with men of brains, with men who really know how to play the game of dollars as it is played in this Christian age. Don't ask me not to call you Beulah; that what I tried to do was for you is the one streak of light in all this black hell. Beulah, Beulah, we are ruined, you, your father, and I, ruined, and I'm the fool who did it."

She rose from her desk with all the quiet, calm dignity that we had been admiring for three months, and stood facing Bob. She did not seem to see me; she saw nothing but the man who had gone out that morning the personification of hope, who now stood before her the picture of black despair, and she must have thought, "It was all for me." Suddenly she took the lapels of his torn coat in either hand. She had to reach up to do it, this winsome little Virginia lady. With her big calm blue eyes looking straight into his, she said:

"Bob."

That was all, but the word seemed to change the very atmosphere in the room. The look of desperation faded from Bob's face, and as though the words had sprung the hidden catch to the doors of his storehouse of pent-up misery, his eyes filled with hot, scorching tears. His great chest was convulsed with sobs. Again—clear, calm, fearless, and tender, came the one syllable, "Bob." And at that Bob's self-control slipped the leash. With a hoarse cry, he threw his arms around her and crushed her to his breast. The sacredness of the scene made me feel like an intruder, and I started to leave the room. But in an instant Beulah Sands was her usual self and, turning to me, she said: "Mr. Randolph, please forget what you have seen. For an instant, as I saw Mr. Brownley's awful misery, I forgot everything but what he had done for me, what he had tried to do for my father, what a penalty he has paid. From what you said when you left and the fact that I got no word from either of you, I feared the worst and did not dare look at the tape; I simply waited and hoped and—prayed. Yes, I prayed as my mother taught me I should pray whenever I was helpless and could do nothing myself. And I felt that God would not let the noble work of two such men be overthrown by those you were battling with. In the midst of a calmness that I took for a good omen, you came. Can you blame me for forgetting myself? Mr. Brownley," the voice was now calm and self-controlled, "tell me what you have done. Where do we stand?"

"There is little to tell," Bob answered. "Camemeyer and 'Standard Oil' have taken me into camp as they would take a stuck pig. They have made a monkeyfied ass out of me, and we are ruined, and I have caused Mr. Randolph a heavy loss. Roughly, I figure that of your four hundred thousand capital and the million four hundred thousand profit you had this morning, only your capital remains."

Wishing to spare Bob, I interrupted and myself gave the girl briefly the details of what had happened. She listened intently and seemed to take in all the trickery of the "System" masters; seemed to see just what it meant to us and to her. But she made no comment, showed by no outward sign that she suffered. As soon as I was through she turned to Bob, who had stood with his eyes fastened upon her face, as though somewhere out of its soft beauty must come an assurance that this was all a bad dream.

"Mr. Brownley," she said, "let us figure up just where we stand, so that we may know what to do to recoup. You have said so many times, since I have been here, that Wall Street is magic land; that no man may tell twenty-four hours ahead what will happen to him. You have said it so many times that I believe it. We know that this morning we were at the goal, that we were millions ahead, and all from twenty-four hours' effort. We have yet almost three months left, and I do not see why we have not just as much chance as we had day before yesterday. Yes, and more, because we know more now. Next

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IT WAS A BATTLE ROYAL—A KING ON ONE SIDE, A RICHELIEU ON THE OTHER.

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time we will include the dividend cuts and the Senate duplicity in our figuring."

We both dumbly stared in wondering admiration at this marvelous woman. Was it possible that a girl could have such nerve, such courage? Or had woman's hope, so persistent where her loved ones are concerned, made Beulah Sands blind to the awfulness of the situation? As I looked at her I could not doubt that she fully realized our position, that she was really suffering more than either of us, that she was only acting to ease Bob's anguish. Bob brought out his memoranda, and in half an hour we had the figures. The total loss was nearly three millions. As Beulah Sands's 20,000 shares had cost less than ours and Bob figured to leave her capital of $400,000 intact, we felt some comfort. Beulah Sands had watched the figuring with the keenness of an expert, and when Bob announced the final figures, which showed that she still had what she started with, she drew the sheet containing the totals to her. "I was willing to accept your assistance," she said, "when the deal promised a profit to all of us, because I appreciated your goodness and knew how much it would hurt your feelings if I were churlish about the division; but now that we all lose I must stand my fair share; I must." She said this in a way that we both knew precluded the possibility of argument. "We owned together 150,000 shares. I was to have had the profits on 20,000 shares. Our total loss is $2,775,000, of which I must bear my just proportion. Mr. Brownley, you will see that $370,000 is charged to my account. I shall have $30,000 left. If our cause is as just as we think, God in his goodness will make this ample for our purposes."

Though Bob and I were in despair at her determination to strip herself of what Bob had worked so hard to accumulate, we could not help feeling a reverence for her faith and her sturdy independence. She now showed us in her delicate way that she wished to be alone; as we went she held out her hand to Bob. "Mr. Brownley, please for the sake of the work we have to do, look on the bright side of this calamity, for it has a bright side. You wanted me to send word to my father that we were about to grasp victory. Think if we had sent it— Then you will know that God is good, even when we think he is chastening us beyond endurance."

Bob took me into his office. "Jim, you see what a woman can do, and we are taught women are the weaker sex. Now listen to what you must do. Accept my notes for the whole loss, less one hundred thousand which I have to my credit, and which I will pay on account. I won't listen to any objection. The deal was mine; you came in only to help us out, and I ought never to have tempted you. If I remain in my present busted condition, the notes will be blank paper. Therefore you do me no harm in taking them. If I should strike it rich, I should never feel like a man until I made up the loss."

It was no use arguing with him in his dogged mood, so I took his demand notes for $2,405,000. I begged him to go home with me to dinner, but he insisted that he could not face my wife with his last night's break still fresh in her mind. Next day he did not turn up. Along in the afternoon I received a telegram from him, saying that he was on his way to Virginia, that he needed a rest and would be back in a week. I was worried, nervous. It takes until the next day and the day after, and the week after that, to get down to the deepest misery of an upset such as we had been through. I did not feel easy with Bob out of sight in his desperate frame of mind. I went to Beulah Sands in hope we might talk over the affair, but when I told her that Bob was to be gone for a week and that I was uneasy, she said in her calm, deliberate way: "I don't think there is anything to worry about, Mr. Randolph. Mr. Brownley is too much of a man to allow an affair of dollars to do anything more than annoy him. He will be back all the better for his rest." She dropped her long lashes in a way that we had come to know closed the conversation.

CHAPTER IV

THE following week Bob returned to the office. He had not changed, and yet he had changed greatly. Rest had apparently done much for him. His color was good, his step elastic as of old, and his head was thrown back as if he was buckled up for the fray and wanted all to know it. Yet there was something in the eye, in the setness of the jaw, in the calm, deliberate, yet fiercely savage way in which he closed his strong hands on the arms of his chair, that told me more plainly than words that this was not the optimistic, soft-hearted Bob Brownley I had known and

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loved. I could not help feeling that if I had been a leader of the Russian terrorists, and this man who now sat before me had come to my ken when I was selecting bomb-throwers, I should have seized upon him of all men as the one to stalk the Czar or his marked minions. Surely the iron that had entered Bob's soul a week before had affected his whole being. I think Beulah Sands had some such thoughts. For I saw a shadow of perplexity cross her broad, low forehead after her first meeting with him, a shadow that had never been there before.

For days after Bob's return I saw little of him. I think Beulah Sands saw less. During Stock Exchange hours he spent most of his time on the floor, but he executed few of our orders. He merely looked them over and handed them out to his assistants. As far as I could learn, he spent much of his time there in walking about, watching things and thinking. So strong had become this habit of going about from pole to pole with bent head and a far-off gaze that his fellow members began to humor and respect it. They all knew that the Sugar panic had hit Bob hard. No one knew how hard, but all guessed from his changed appearance and habits that it must have been a staggering blow. Nothing so quickly and so deeply stirs a Stock Exchange man's feelings for his brother member as to know that Fate has fetched him a backhanded welt—that is, if he has been a good fellow. They will humor his every whim and patiently await the day when he shall be again in normal condition; for all stock-gamblers whom Fate has door-matted, either disappear immediately or eventually round to. Every day as soon as the Stock Exchange closed, Bob disappeared, where I could not find out. I had tried once or twice to draw him out, under pretense of insisting upon his accepting my wife's invitation to dine with us. He always had a ready excuse for me to take to Kate, but that was all. Apparently he had no idea that I took any interest in his movements after business hours.

As for Beulah Sands, there was but one change noticeable in her. Whenever a footstep stopped in front of her office she looked up from her work with an expectant, almost appealing gaze, as though she were always waiting for some one. I had not seen Bob in her office since that disastrous Sugar day, and as he went directly to the Exchange every morning and left there every afternoon without returning to the office, doing all his business by messenger or over the wire, there was but little chance of his meeting her.

November 1st had come and gone, and the books showed no change in Beulah Sands's account. There was the poor little $30,000 balance; no other entries. One afternoon Beulah Sands had asked for a meeting between Bob and myself in her office. She could hardly have asked Bob to come without me, but I knew it was Bob she wanted to see, and I felt that the best thing I could do for them was to leave them alone. So I made some excuse for a moment's delay at my desk, telling Bob to go on into her office, and promising to follow shortly. He went in, leaving the door partly open. I think that from the moment he entered the room both of them utterly forgot my existence. From her desk Beulah could not see me, and Bob sat so that his back was half toward me. "I dislike to trouble you about my account," I heard her begin in a voice a trifle uneven, "but as I must go back to father Christmas week, I wanted to get your advice as to the advisability of writing him that, though there is still a chance for doing wonders, I do not think we shall be able to save him. Of course I won't put it in just that blunt way, but it seems to me I should begin to prepare him for the blow. I have not talked over any more plunging with you, Mr. Brownley, since the unlucky one in Sugar, and——"

"Miss Sands, I understand what you mean," Bob broke in, "and I should apologize for not having consulted with you about your business affairs. The fact is, I have not been quite clear as to the best thing to do. I hope you don't think I have forgotten. Never for a moment since I took charge of your affairs have I forgotten my promise to see that they were kept active. Truly I have been trying to think out some successful plunge, but—but"—there was a hoarseness in his voice—"I have not had my old confidence in myself since that day in Sugar when I killed your hopes and destroyed the chance of saving your father,—no, I have not had that confidence a man must have in himself to win at this gambling game."

There was a silence, and then I heard an indescribable fluttering rush that told as plainly as sight could have done that a woman had answered her heart's call. Looking up involuntarily, I saw a sight that for a long moment held my eyes as if I had been fascinated. It was Bob bowed forward with his face hidden in his hands and beside him, on

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her knees, Beulah Sands, her arms about his neck, his head drawn down to her bosom. "Bob, Bob," she said chokingly, "I cannot stand it any longer. My heart is breaking for you. You were so happy when I came into your life, and the happiness is changed to misery and despair, and all for me, a stranger. At first I thought of nothing but father and how to save him, but since that day when those men struck at your heart, I have been filled with, oh! such a longing to tell you, to tell you, Bob——"

"What? Beulah, what? For the love of God, don't stop; tell me, Beulah, tell me." He had not lifted his head. It was buried on her breast, his arms closed around her. She bent her head and laid her beautiful, soft cheek, down which the tears were now streaming, against his brown hair. "Bob, forgive me, but I love you, love you, Bob, as only a woman can love who has never known love before, never known anything but stern duty. Bob, night after night when all have left I have crept into your office and sat in your chair. I have laid my head on your desk and cried and cried until it seemed as though I could not live till morning without hearing you say that you loved me, and that you did not mind the ruin I had brought into your life. I have patted the back of your chair where your dear head had rested. I have covered the arms of your chair, that your strong, brave hands had gripped, with kisses. Night after night I have knelt at your desk and prayed to God to shield you, to protect you from all harm, to brush away the black cloud I brought into your life. I have asked him to do with me, yes, with my father and mother, anything, anything if only he would bring back to you the happiness I had stolen. Bob, I have suffered, suffered, as only a woman can suffer."

She was sobbing as though her heart would break, sobbing wildly, convulsively, like the little child who in the night comes to its mother's bed to tell of the black goblins that have been pursuing it. Long before she had finished speaking—and it took only a few heart-beats for that rush of words—I had broken the power of the fascination that held me, had turned away my eyes, and tried not to listen. For fear of breaking the spell, I did not dare cross the room to close Beulah's door or to reach the outer door of my office, which was nearer hers than it was to my desk. I waited—through a silence, broken only by Beulah's weeping, that seemed hour-long. Then in Bob's voice came one low sob of joy:

"Beulah, Beulah, my Beulah!"

I realized that he had risen. I rose too, thinking that now I could close the door. But again I saw a picture that transfixed me. Bob had taken Beulah by both shoulders, and he held her off and looked into her eyes long and beseechingly. Never before nor since have I seen upon human face that glorious joy which the old masters sought to get into the faces of their worshipers who, kneeling before Christ, tried to send to him, through their eyes, their soul's gratitude and love. I stood as one enthralled. Slowly and as reverently as the living lover touches the brow of his dead wife, Bob bent his head and kissed her brow. Again and again he drew her to him and implanted upon her brow and eyes and lips his kisses. I could not stand the scene any longer. I started to the corridor-door, and then, as though for the first time either had known I was within hearing, they turned and stared at me. At last Bob gave a loud, happy laugh.

"Well, Jim, dear old Jim, where did you come from? Like all eavesdroppers, you have heard no good of yourself. Own up, Jim, you did not hear a word good or bad about yourself, for it is just coming back to me that we have been selfish, that we have left you entirely out of our business conference."

We all laughed, and Beulah Sands, with her face a burning mass of blushes, said: "Mr. Randolph, we have not settled what it is best to do about father's affairs."

After a little we did begin to talk business, and finally agreed that Beulah should write her father, wording her letter as carefully as possible, to avoid all direct statements, but showing him that she had made but little headway on the work she had come North to accomplish. Bob was a changed being now; so too was Beulah Sands. Both discussed their hopes and fears with a frankness in strange contrast to their former manner. But there was one point on which Bob showed he was holding back. I finally put it to him bluntly: "Bob, are you working out anything that looks like real relief for Miss Sands and her father?"

"I don't know how to answer you, Jim. I can only say I have some ideas, radical ones perhaps, but—well, I am thinking along certain lines."

I saw he was not yet willing to take us into his confidence. We parted, Bob going along in the cab with Miss Sands.

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Two days afterward she sent for us both as soon as we got to the office.

"I have this telegram from father—it makes me uneasy: 'Mailed to-day important letter. Answer as soon as you receive.'"

The following afternoon the letter came. It showed Judge Sands in a very nervous, uneasy state. He said he had been living a life of daily terror, as some of his friends, for whose estates he was trustee, had been receiving anonymous letters, advising them to look into the judge's trust affairs; that the Reinheart crowd had been using renewed pressure to make him let go all his Seaboard stock, which they wanted to secure at the low prices to which they had depressed it, in order that they might reorganize and carry out the scheme they had been so long planning. Judge Sands went on to say that the day he was compelled to sell his Seaboard stock he would have to make public an announcement of his condition, as there could be no sale without the court's consent. His closing was:

"My dear daughter, no one knows better than I the almost hopelessness of expecting any relief from your operations. But so helpless have I become of late, so much am I reliant upon you, my dear child, and eternal hope so springs in all of us when confronted with great necessities, that I have hoped and still hope that you are to be the savior of your family; that you, only a frail child, are through God's marvelous workings to be the one to save the honor of that name we both love more than life; the one to keep the wolf of poverty from that door through which so far has come nothing but the sunshine of prosperity and happiness; the one, my dear Beulah, who is to save your old father from a dishonored grave. Dear child, forgive me for placing upon your weak shoulders the additional burden of knowing I am now helpless and compelled to rely absolutely upon you. After you have read my letter, if there is no hope, I command you to tell me so at once, for although I am now financially and almost mentally helpless, I am still a Sands, and there has never yet been one of the name who shirked his duty, however stern and painful it might be."

When I handed the letter back to Miss Sands, she said:

"Mr. Randolph, let me tell you and Mr. Brownley a little about my father and our home, that you may see our situation as it is. My father is one of the noblest men that ever lived. I am not the only one who says that—if you were to ask the people of our State to name the one man who had done most for the State as a State, most for her progressive betterment, most for her people high and low, white and black, they would answer, 'Judge Lee Sands.' He has been, and is, the idol of our people. After he was graduated from Harvard, he entered the law-office of my grandfather Senator Robert Lee Sands. Before he was thirty he was in Congress and was even then reputed the greatest orator of our State, where orators are so plentiful. He married my mother, his second cousin, Julia Lee, of Richmond, at twenty-five, and from then until the attack of that ruthless money-shark, led a life such as a true man would map out for himself if his Maker granted him the privilege. You would have to visit at our home to appreciate my father's character and to understand how terrible this sorrow is to him. Every morning of his life he spends an hour after breakfast with my dear mother, who is a cripple from hip disease. He takes her in his arms and brings her down from her room to the library as if she were a child. He then reads to her—and he knows good books as well as he knows his friends. After he takes mother back to her room, he gives an hour to our people, the blacks of the plantation and his white tenants throughout the county. He is a father to them all. He settles all their troubles, big and little. Then for hours he and I go over his business affairs. Every afternoon from four to five he devotes to his estates and the men and women for whom he acts as trustee. He has often said to me: 'We have a clear million of money and property, and that is all any man should have in America. It is all he is entitled to under our form of government. Any more than that an honest man should in one way or another return to the people from whom he has taken it. I never want my family to have more than a million dollars.' When he went into the Seaboard affair, he explained to me that it was to assist the Wilsons—they were old friends, and he has acted as their solicitor for years—in building up the South. He discussed with me the right and advisability of putting in the trust funds. He said he considered it his duty to employ them as he did his own in enterprises that would aid the whole people of the South, instead of sending them to the North to be used in enabling Wall Street and the 'System' to plunder the people further. These fortunes were made in the South by men who loved their section of the country more than they did wealth, and why should they not be employed to benefit that part of the country which their makers and owners loved? I remember vividly how perplexed

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he was when, at the beginning, the Wilsons would show him that the investments were returning unusually large profits.

"'It is not right, Beulah,' he said to me one morning after receiving a letter from Baltimore to the effect that Seaboard stock and bonds had advanced until his investment showed over fifty per cent. profit, 'it is not right for us to make this money. No man in America should make over legal rates of interest and a fair profit on an investment, that is, an investment of capital pure and simple, particularly in a transportation company, where every dollar of profit comes from the people who patronize the lines. I have worked it out on every side, and it is not right; it would not be legal if the people, who make the laws for their own betterment, understood their affairs as they should.'

"He was always writing to the Wilsons to conduct the affairs of the Seaboard so that there would be remaining each year only profits enough to keep the road up and the wharves in good condition and to pay the annual interest and a fair dividend. And when the Wilsons came to our house to lay before him the offer of Reinheart and his fellow plunderers to pay enormous profits for the control of the Seaboard, he was indignant and argued with them that the offer was an insult to honest men. It was he who advised the trusteeship control of the Seaboard stock to prevent Reinheart from securing control. I sat in the library when he talked to the elder Wilson and the directors.

"He appealed directly to John Wilson to make an effort to stop the growing tendency to use the people as pawns to enslave themselves and their children. He said some man of undoubted probity, standing, and wealth, some one that the people trusted, must start the fight against these New York fiends whose only thought is to roll up wealth. And he told John Wilson he was the man, since he had great wealth, honestly got by his father and grandfather; no one would accuse him of being a hypocrite, seeking notoriety, and his standing in the financial world was so old and solid that it would have to listen to him. I remember how emphatically father said: 'I tell you, John, *even the discussion* of such a proposition as that scoundrel Reinheart makes is degrading to an American's honor.' He said it didn't make the least difference if Reinheart counted his millions by the score, and was director in thirty or forty great institutions, and gave a fortune every year for charity and to the church—that he was a blackleg just the same. And so is any man, he said, who dares to say he will take the stock of a transportation company, which represents a certain amount of money invested, and double or multiply it by five and ten, simply because he can compel the people to pay exorbitant fares and freight-rates and so get profits on this fraudulently increased capital.

"It was the decision arrived at by father and the Wilsons at this meeting, a decision to refuse in any circumstances to allow our Southern people to be bled by the Wall Street 'System,' that started Reinheart and his dollar-fiends on the war-path. You can see from what I tell you of my father the terrible condition he is in now. At night, when I get to thinking of him, hoping against hope, with no one to help him, no one with whom he can talk over his affairs, when I think of his nobleness in devoting his time to mother and by sheer will-power concealing from her his awful suffering, it nearly drives me mad."

"Miss Sands, why will you not let me lend you the money necessary to tide your father over for a while?" I asked.

"You are so good, Mr. Randolph, but you don't quite understand my father in spite of what I have said. He would not relieve his suffering at the expense of another, not if it were a hundred times more acute. You cannot understand the old-fashioned, deep-rooted pride of the Sands."

"But can you not, at least temporarily, disguise from him just how you have arranged the relief?"

Her big blue eyes stared at me in bewilderment.

"Mr. Randolph, I could not deceive father. I could not tell him a lie even to save his life. It would be impossible. My father abhors a lie. He believes a man or woman who would lie the lowest of the low things on earth. When I go back to my father he will say, 'Tell me what you have done.' I can just see him now, standing between the big white pillars at the end of the driveway. I can hear him say calmly, 'Beulah, my daughter, welcome. Your mother is waiting for you in her room. Do not lose a moment getting to her.' Afterward he'll take me over the plantation to show me all the familiar things, and not one word will he allow me to say about our affairs until dinner is over, until the neighbors have left, for no Sands returns from

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IT WAS BOB WITH HIS FACE HIDDEN IN HIS HANDS AND BESIDE HIM, ON HER KNEES, BEULAH SANDS.

long absence without a proper home welcome. When I have said good night to mother and he has drawn up my rocker in front of his big chair in the library alcove and I've lighted his cigar for him, he will look me in the eye and say, 'Daughter, tell me all you have done.' I would no more think of holding anything back than I would of stabbing him to the heart. No, Mr. Randolph, there is no possibility of relief except in fairly using that $30,000 and fairly winning back what Wall Street has stolen from father. Even that will cause both of us many twinges of conscience, and anything more is impossible. If this cannot be done, father must, all of us must, pay the penalty of Reinheart's hellish act."

Bob had listened, but made no comment until she was through; then he said, "It looks to me as though the market is shaping up so that we may be able to do something soon." It was evident to both of us that he had some plan in mind.

Later we learned that that night Beulah wrote her father a long letter, telling him what she had done; that she had made almost two millions profit from her operations, that they had been lost, and that the outlook was not reassuring. She begged him to prepare himself for the final calamity; promising that if there were no change for the better by December 1st, she would come home to be with him when the blow fell. She begged him to prepare to meet it like a Sands, and assured him that if worse came to worst she could earn enough to keep poverty away. Judge Sands would receive this letter the second day following, Friday, the 13th day of November. My God! how well I know the date. It is seared into my brain as though with a white-hot iron.

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After our talk with Beulah Sands I begged Bob to dine with me and go over matters at length to see if we could not find a way out to relief.

"No, Jim, I have work to do to-night, work that won't wait. That Tariff Bill was buttoned up to-day, and it has just been announced that the Sugar directors have declared a big extra stock dividend. Things have come out just about as I told you they would, and the stock is whooping to-day. They say it will touch 200 to-morrow and 'the Street' is predicting 250 for it in ten days. Barry Conant has been a steady buyer all day and the news bureaus announced that Camemeyer and the 'Standard Oil' are twenty millions winners. They say the Washington gamblers, the Congressmen, Senators, and Cabinet members with their heelers and lobbyists have made a killing. About every one seems to have fattened up, Jim, but you and me and Beulah Sands and the public. The public gets the ax both ways, as usual. They have been shaken out of their stock, and they will be compelled to pay millions more each year for their sugar than they would if this law had not been made for their benefit. Jim, there is no disguising the fact that the American people are as helpless in the hands of these thugs of the 'System' as though they lived in the realm of the Sultan, where a few cutthroat brigands are licensed to rob and oppress to their heart's content. Jim Randolph, you know this game of finance. You know how it is worked and the men who work it. Tell me if there is any consideration due Wall Street and its heart-and-soul butchers at the hands of honest men."

"I don't know what you mean, Bob. What are you driving at?"

"Never mind what I am driving at. I ask you whether, if an honest man knew how to beat Wall Street at its own game, he should hesitate to beat it—hesitate because of anything connected with conscience or morals? You saw what Barry Conant was able to do to us that day simply by standing on the floor of the Stock Exchange and outstaying me in opening and closing his mouth. You saw he was able to sell Sugar to a point so low that I was obliged to let go of our 150,000 shares at eight to ten million dollars less than we could have got for them if we could have held them until to-day. Because of this trick his clients, the 'System,' instead of us, make five to seven millions."

"I don't follow you, Bob. I know that Barry Conant was able to do this because he had more money behind him than you."

"You think so, do you, Jim? That is the way it looks to you, but I tell you money had nothing to do with it. Nothing had to do with it but the hellish system of fraud and trickery upon which the whole stock-gambling structure is reared. Nothing entered into the whole business but the trickery of stock-gambling as conducted to-day. It was only a question, Jim, of a man's opening and closing his mouth and spitting out words. From the minute Barry Conant came into that crowd until he left and we were ruined, he showed no money, no anything that I did not show. From the very nature of the business he could not. He simply said 'Sold' oftener and longer than I said 'Buy.' He may have had money back of him, or he may only have had nerve. God Almighty is the only one who can tell, for when Conant was through he was able to buy back at 90 the 50,000 shares he sold me at 175, the 50,000 that broke my back. Jim, if I had known as much that day as I do now I would have stood in that crowd and bought all the stock he sold at 180 and I would have stood there buying until hell froze over or he quit; then I would have made him rebuy it at 280 or 2,080, and I would have broken him and all his Camemeyer and 'Standard Oil' backers; broken them to their last crime-covered dollar."

"Bob, what are you talking about? It is all Chinese to me. I cannot get head or tail of what you are driving at."

"I know you can't, Jim; neither could Wall Street if it were listening to me. But you will, and Wall Street will too, before many days go by. Now I must be off. I have work to do."

He put on his hat and left me trying to puzzle out just what he meant.

Next day the Sugar bulls had the center of the Stock Exchange stage. All day long they tossed Sugar from one to another as though each thousand shares had been a wisp of hay instead of $200,000—for soon after the opening it soared to 200. The "System's" cohorts were in absolute control, with Barry Conant never a minute away from the Sugar-pole, always on the alert to steer the course of prices when they threatened to run away on the up or the down side. It was evident to the expert readers of the tape that the "System" was currying its steed for an exceptionally brilliant run. Ike Bloomstein,

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the Average Fiend, who for forty years had kept close track of every movement on the floor, and who would bet anything, from his Fifth Avenue mansion to his overripe board-room straw hat, that all stocks and movements were as strictly subject to the law of averages as are the tides to the moon and sun, remarked to Joe Barnes, the loan expert, "'Cam' unt de Keroseners are pudding up egstra dop rails to dot wool-pen deh haf ben pilding since deh took Pop Prownlee and deh Rantolphs into gamp. Unless my tope-sheet goes pack on me, for deh first dime in forty years dere vill pe a record clip pefore a veek from to-tay."

"I am with you there, Ike," answered Joe. "If Barry Conant's knife-edged teeth ever spelt a killin', they do to-day. I just got orders from somewhere to drop call money from four to two and a half per cent., and they have given me ten millions to drop it with and the order is to favor Sugar as 'colat.' Some one is anxious to make it easy for the bleaters to get the coin to buy all the Sugar they want. Ike, you and I might make turkey money for Thanksgiving if we only knew whether Barry and his bunch were going to shoot her up thirty or forty points before they turned the bag upside down, or whether they will bury them from 200 to 150. What do you think?"

"I gant make out, aldo I haf vatched dem sharp all day. Dey certainly haf deh lambs lined up right now for any vey dey vont to twist id. I nefer see a petter market for a deluge. From Barry's movements all day I should say dey vould keep hoistin' her until apout noon to-morrow, unt dat deh might get her up to two tirty or even to deh two fifty. Put dere are von or two topes on deh sheet vhat run deh uder vay. First, der is dey fact you gant run out, dat dere is alreaty on deh Sugar vagon deh piggest load of chuicy suckers dat efer game in from deh suppurbs. Sharley Pates says if any von hat tapped his Vashington vire er any utter Capitol vire dis veek he vould haf tought dere vas a Senate, House, unt Kabinet roll-gall on. Deh topes say 'Cam' vill nefer let dat fat punch off grafters slite out mit real money if he gan help id unt deh game iss endirely in his hands."

"I agree with you, Ike. If I had the steering of this killing I don't think I would take any chance of tempting them to dump and grab the profits by carrying it much over 200. But you can't tell what 'Cam' and those four-eyed dentists at 26 Broadway will do."

"Yes, put der iss anudder t'ing, Cho, dat makes me sit up unt plink about her goin' ofer two hundred. To-morrow's Friday, der t'irteenth."

"Of course, Ike, that is something to be reckoned with, and every man on the floor and in the Street as well has his eye on it. Friday, the 13th, would break the best bull market ever under way. You and I know that, Ike, and the dope shows it too, but you have got to stack this up against it on this trip: no man on the floor knows what Friday, the 13th, means better than Barry Conant. He has worked it to the queen's taste many a time. Why, Barry would not eat to-day for fear the food would get stuck in his wind-pipe. He's never left the pole for a minute; but suppose, Ike, Barry has tipped off 'Cam' that all the boys will let go their fliers, and most of them will take one on the short side over to-night for a superstition drop at the opening; and suppose 'Cam' has told him to take them all into camp and give her a rafter-scraper at the opening, where would old Friday, 13th, land on to-morrow's dope-sheets? Bring up the average, wouldn't it, for five years to come? I tell you, Ike, she's too deep for me this run, and I'm goin' to let her alone and pay for the turkey out of loan commissions or stick to plain workday food."

"Zame here, Cho. Say, Cho, haf you noticed Pop Prownlee to-tay? He has frozen to deh fringe off dat Sugar crowd ess t'ough some von hat nipped 'is scarf-pin unt he vos layin' for him ass he game out. He hasn't made a trade to-tay unt yet he sticks like a stamp-tax. I ben keeping my eyes on him for I t'ought he hat someding up his sleeve dat might raise tust ven he tropt id. I dink Parry has hat deh same itear. He never loses sight of him, yet Pop hasn't made a trade to-tay, unt here id iss twenty minutes of der glose unt dere iss Parry in deh center again whooping her up ofer two hundred unt four."

"***Friday, the 13th***" will be continued in the February number.

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The Lords of the World

by Edith Rickert

Illustrations by Sigismond Ivanowski

PRINCE BALTHAZAR, sixth of that name, ruler over cities and strong forts, master of all the men and chattels between the Alps and the sea, eastward and westward to the two rivers, blest with all good gifts of fortune, sat in the window of his hall overlooking his wide lands; and although it was the eve of Noël, he was exceedingly sorrowful. The wish was upon him to find a thing for which he might wish. Lands? A curse was prepared for that member of his house who should try to rule more than the nine and seventy cities allotted them by God. Love? There was none to deny his asking, and his princess was sung for her beauty and her sweet grace in all the courts of the world. Riches? Gold dripped from his fingers upon every beggar that came his way. An heir? The babe slept in a cedar-wood cradle, rocked by two ladies of high degree. Power? He had made kings and unmade them. Heaven? It was secure from the terms of his will. There was nothing that he could not do . . . nothing that he might not have. And while the cooks in the underground kitchens that he never saw steamed in the smell of their own sauces, and the scullions raced and ran, and the idle page-boys on the stairways chanted old roundelays until they were cuffed into service, the lord of them all sat alone and dreary at the thought of the feasting to come.

So dull did he grow, looking out upon his olives and his almonds and his mulberries, his pasturage and his salines, his corn-lands and his windmills, and the towers of the abbeys that he had built or endowed, his rivers and pine forests, and the chain of lakes in the marshes where the fishing was all his—so dull that it seemed to him he had always been sitting thus in his chair of inlaid cypress wood, as still as would lie, one far-off day, the stone image on his tomb. There came into his muse the sound of a great knocking at the outer gate of the courtyard, and of a voice that cried out: "Open—open—to the lord of the world."

And although he did not stir from his place, he knew—he could not tell how—that a hush had fallen upon the castle, and that every living creature within its rock-hewn walls paused in his work or in his speech, and waited breathless what should follow. Only a scullion who was polishing a great copper pot near the cistern, let this fall with a clang upon the stones; and after that there was no sound for a while.

The prince Balthazar would have risen from his chair, but he was fettered as strongly as if he had been a prisoner in his own dungeon.

Then again came that shrill cry from below, and with it a bitter wind that shook the rock foundations of the castle: "Open—open to the master of the world!"

At this, the lord Balthazar fell into such a jealous rage that he got to his feet, malgre the heaviness that dragged at him like great weights. He essayed to stride across the room; but his feet clung to every stone. He strove and he strained until the sweat pricked out on his brow; and all the while was the thundering at his gate, and none went to open. He knew, though he could not tell how, that a deadly fear sat upon every heart within his walls.

But the end of his fighting was that he gained his way, inch by inch, until at last, in that waiting silence, he reached the dais where his armor hung; and drew down his helmet and his hauberk, his great sword and his Pavian dagger—for more gear he had no time. And as he was buckling with fingers that shook until they could scarcely make the clasps meet, he knew that the gates were giving way and that something unknown would be upon him. And yet he could not

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move his lips to cry out the thought of his heart: "Keep the bar fast!"

There came a strange whistling sound and a rattle as of dry bones, together with the clang of armor on the stairs; and with this, the lord Balthazar gave a mighty leap and pressed with his whole weight against the door. Once—twice he shouted the battle-cry of his house: "*Au hazard, Balthazar!*" But when he would have essayed it a third time, there came from without a dry laugh that withered the voice in his throat. For all that he leaned against the door, as heavily as a man in desperate straits, he felt it yielding slowly, and heard the cracking of his own sinews under the strain. When he saw that it might not be otherwise, he who never yet had turned his back upon friend or foe, suddenly withdrew, and flung wide the great oak, and laughed in his turn: "Come then, and let us fight for the lordship of the world!"

At first, there was a mist across his eyes; then out of the darkness was spun a gleam of metal, a glitter of teeth, and eyes that burned like fire-balls through a helmet.

"Thou or I?" said a voice behind the head-bars. "Thou or I!" And again the laugh whistled down the stairway until all below that heard it crossed themselves and told beads; and some fell on the ground in fear of their own doom.

But the lord Balthazar was a stout man, and held his ground with such a sudden sweep of his long sword as sent his adversary's helmet and what might be within it, rolling like an olive across the floor. He began a shout of triumph, which never in this world was finished; for there came upon his throat so fell a clutch and hard, that he dropped upon one knee—and then on both—and at last was thrust slowly backward and down to the very stones, though he contended inch by inch, with eyes that never left his headless foe until breath failed him altogether. And the last thing he saw through the darkness was how that nameless one, kneeling on his chest, stretched out a long arm, and set again on his trunk the helmet—and whatsoever was within it.

At this the prince felt for the cross on his sword-hilt and muttered such prayer as he remembered.

But the adversary laughed, clacking his teeth together, so that it seemed as if they would fall out, being loose and decayed and broken away; and he dropped hard words like hailstones:

"Fear not for thy own soul. Rule still thy seventy-nine cities. Him I seek is the seventh of thy name. For him it is time that masses be said and sung; all thy fighting gained him but seven minutes more of this sweet lower air."

With that he gave an upward leap, just as the great *Capoun-Fer*, the golden falcon, does sometimes spring when he has caught his prey; and the lord of all the lands between the Alps and the sea and the two rivers, lay as still as he would lie ever in his tomb. . . .

There came a loud cry of women from an upper chamber, and pierced the sleep of his soul. He tugged and strained until he got to his feet in the dim hall, shaking like an old, palsied man with dread of what his eyes might see. But at his feet was only a foolish little page, whom he had beaten that very day for sticking out a saucy tongue at one of the women; and the boy was sobbing, stammering, afraid to speak.

"What then? what?" asked Balthazar, lifting the child by the girdle, so that he hung piteously.

"The little prince—the little prince. . . ."

The man made one stride to the door that opened upon the spiral stairway:

"Speak truth, or I drop thee. He is dead?"

"Not dead"—the child shivered—"but yet. . . . They made me come because I was the smallest, and they were all afraid."

Then his master set him down gently enough, and left him to crawl away and weep out the fear that had shaken his heart, huddled in the shadow of the courtyard well.

Slowly—slowly—as one half awake, half dreaming, Balthazar took down a torch from its socket, held it to the smoldering logs until it was alight; and so passed to the great chamber.

The child lay on his mother's knee, unswaddled and wrapped in white wool; and it seemed that an evil spirit was sucking away the breath from his lips. One of the women was at the high armoire, busy with vials and medicaments; another knelt as in prayer, but her fingers tied knots in a cord, in lieu of passing beads. There were many maidens in the chamber, weeping and praying and clinging one to another; while the chaplain stood in his robes, at the end of all his function.

When Balthazar came in and hung up his torch, there fell a silence among that great concourse of people, and they watched to see what he might do. And they saw that he

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looked about him as strangely as if never he had been in that room before: at the ancient tapestries, of Darius and Alexander, of Amadas and Ydoine, of Flamenca and the wars of Conan, and the tale of Troy; at the great bed, with its canopy and curtains in Persian cloth of gold—nay, he even pulled at its fringes as if to assure himself the thing was real; at the tall armoire, with its basins of gold and silver-gilt, with its seven-branched candelabra of Italian work, set out with rubies and jacinth and chrysoprase. Last of all he turned to his young wife, who had not paused to lay aside her robe of scarlet ingrain, with its winged sleeves embroidered in golden fleur-de-lis, and its furring of ermine; but he looked not so much at the babe on which her face was bent, as at her glittering coif and collar, at her frontlet of pearls with the one great diamond, that he had given her on their wedding-day. And there surged up in his heart a sudden deep bitterness. She had brought him never child but this one that was dying; and so near to death had she been herself that there was no hope of another. . . .

Then came the woman who had been knotting the cord, and would have put it about the babe's neck, but the priest came forward to stop her: "What is this?"

Weeping, she answered: "This relic of one of the Holy Innocents hath availed nothing; and my lady bade me knot this cord sealed with thirteen prayers, for that is exceeding good when the breath fails."

And when the priest cried out that this was worship of the old gods, said Balthazar: "Let be. We must stoop to all things. But pray thou also with me." So, kneeling, he seized a chaplet of bone from the wrist of a serving-maid, and began to tell the beads, so quickly and so strongly that the chaplain had much ado to follow.

But for all that amulets might work, with cordials and prayers together, the child's breathing grew fainter, until there came a moment when, on his knees before his folk, Balthazar stooped with a steel glass in his hand to see whether life stirred there.

Suddenly with a loud cry he leaped to his feet and stared about him as one bereft of his senses; and he laughed terribly: "Seventy-nine cities—throw them to the wolves—or the winds! All I have bought with sweat and blood—all I have toiled and schemed to maintain—why, they are gone. . . . There is no heir—after five hundred years unbroken—there is no heir. . . ."

His rough voice failed him, but he would not weep. He dashed to the floor chaplet and crucifix together, and trod upon them until none might know what they had been; and with that he cursed so horribly that many cried out and some swooned in fear that the swift vengeance of God would be upon them.

Most bitterly he raved against Death, who lurks in the shadows and steals forth unperceived to accomplish his evil will, with none to contest his power. "Let him come forth!" cried Balthazar in his madness, "as he came before this night—I know not whether it was dream or waking—but let him come again in armor and with steel that I may contend with him openly and freely . . . as I fought before . . . and let him take neither of us or both, if he prevails . . . let him come knocking at my gate. . . ."

Far away and faint came the sound of tapping on the barred and iron-studded porte.

A shudder went through the room, as a ripple through wheat; and while one bolder than the others murmured of Christmas guests, none moved to answer, though the gate-ward was among them.

The gentle tapping swelled into a beating as of hands desperate; and this into a thundering rain of blows that stilled the heart. But not long did this endure, for there was a running across the flagstones, and one near the window told of a little page who had risen by the well and unbarred the postern, as for one of low degree.

Thereupon there would have been a panic from the room, had not Balthazar held the doorway with his body and the sword that he found girded to his hip.

"No," said he, "if my prayer be granted, and this be Death indeed, he shall find here a full harvest—in honor of my young son."

Yet his grim face grew paler at the rushing of feet on the stairs; and he poised himself once again for dire battle. But when he saw —what he saw when the Solomon tapestry was thrust aside, he did not bring down his uplifted sword in a cleaving stroke, but let it sink slowly to the ground, staring at him who entered.

It was a young man, slight, pale, meager, with long, thin, waxy hair, and hands that had known toil. Very curious were his light, bright eyes; and very shabby his gown and cloak of faded serge.

"I am the master of life," quoth he, stepping in boldly among them all, "and would you kill me on your threshold?"

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"THOU OR I?" SAID A VOICE. "THOU OR I!"

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He who claimed lordship over that far-stretching land, fell back without a sign, while the stranger by gesture and by demeanor caused that all the many people in the great chamber should pass out before him. And this he did until none were left but Balthazar himself and his lady, who held the child in her arms.

Gently enough, he in the frayed and mud-stained serge took from the glittering princess, whose fairness was all disfigured by her weeping, her only son; and bade her softly, yet so that she could not disobey: "Go now and trust me. I am the master of life."

Then perceiving that the priest still lingered at the door of the small chamber, in some doubt and hesitation, he said: "Your place before the altar; mine in the chamber of death." And the man of God dared not linger.

To Balthazar it passed as swiftly as a miracle that the yellow-haired stranger should be sitting in the chair of the princess, with the child on his knees, touching its nostrils and lips from a vial that he held, and watching—and watching—and even as he watched, he was watched in turn by the master of the house, leaning on the great sword that had been of so little avail.

"Save him," croaked the prince—he was not used to plead. "Then ask."

At this the stranger laughed softly, though he never looked up from his close study of the babe: "And if it were all your wealth—your seventy-nine strong forts—all your joy-bringing jewels—what then?"

"With my child and my sword," said Balthazar the Great, "I can win the world again."

"The world? One world," said the stranger. "Not my world. There you would be more foolish than the meanest scullion. . . . Give me the little red vial—so—and the wooden box yonder—no, the one with the yellow dragon on the lid—and a cup—oh, ay, of silver or of gold, that's no matter so it holds the drink."

With a careful hand he mixed, and he counted out drops; and he fed the child more tenderly than its own mother could have done.

The sands of the hour-glass fell and fell, the two of them watching, with never a word between them. And all that great household was at prayer, while down in the village the guests who had come for the Mass and the feasting, lingered and talked in hushed voices of the sorrowful news that must turn them home again.

It lacked still an hour of midnight when the stranger laid the child in its cradle and covered it well; then he turned to the lord Balthazar with a gleam of laughter in his light, bright eyes:

"Now bid your cooks set their spits a-twirling, and send to call up your guests from the village, for Death rides away like the wind, cursing the day that I was born."

"He will live?" asked the prince in his rough, passionate voice; and when he perceived the young man nodding freely, he dropped on the bench before the fire and hid his face in his hands, crying like a little child.

The stranger moved about softly, smiling to himself, as he gathered up and packed away his vials, his boxes, and his instruments.

"And now," said he at last, "I must be on my way, for my wanderings are not soon ended."

Hereupon the lord of the castle sprang to his feet, and brushing his face as a man ashamed, went to one of his iron-bound treasure-chests, of which in the chamber there were three. But after he had thrown it open, he turned back in his steps, and knelt again by the cedar-wood cradle, as if he could not yet believe that the babe slept quietly and without encumbrance of evil spirit. And the young physician did not forbid him, but laughed to see his doubt.

Then he reached into his chest and drew forth a great leather bag: "This is the beginning," said he. "And there shall be more and more until your days are ended, and your children's children. . . ."

"My children's children?" repeated the young man gravely. He thrust his hand into the bag, and made a soft tinkle among the gold coins, that were fresh from the mint and stamped with the head of Balthazar. Then he put away the treasure: "This for me? What has this to do with me? Life cannot be bought. It is always a gift. You are lord of all that you look upon; you can take away—I know not how many thousand lives; but you cannot give one—not one—as I have given you to-night. And so you must share the lordship of the world. . . ."

"Who are you?" asked Balthazar, and a sudden fear sat heavy upon him.

The stranger laughed as he slung his wallet again by his side: "A poor physician—a wanderer—often homeless; but Death to me

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does homage, just as your liegemen kneel to your mastery. But of the two of you Death proved the stronger, this night."

He raised the Solomon tapestry, and turned to descend the spiral stairs.

"Go not yet!" cried Balthazar. "I am used to giving, not taking. How can I pay for the life of my son? By the virtue of your healing power, speak, that I may make some return. If you despise my gold for yourself, is there none other? You are still young; your father . . .?"

"He was a village carpenter and is dead," said the stranger gently. But there came something of sternness into his tone, as he continued: "Take freely as was freely given. But remember to share thy lordship with death, and with him who is master of death—and of life. God be with thee." He was gone.

And before the lord Balthazar ceased to wonder that suddenly he had used the familiar "thou," there came a clang of the great gates thrown wide to receive the first of the Christmas guests.

But although he heard them in the hall below, drinking to the health of his house, the lord Balthazar stood yet a while at the head of the stairway, and let the women pass him by into the great chamber, returning by twos and threes, fluttering, and whispering over the sleeping babe. And as he stood there, he thought not of the peril that had come and gone, nor even how his high estate was restored, nor yet of the gentle stranger of whom he understood neither the words nor the healing; he thought only—and this for the first time in his life—how all his suzerain power was, in the sight of God, but as the weakness of the unweaned child.

The Lotus of Wisdom

By ALFRED NOYES

WHAT shaken blossoms from the Tree of Life,
In showers of glimmering white and deep dim blue
Through strange soft starry twilights here bestrew
The breathless borders of the world of strife?
What sound of sighs upon the scented gloom
Of Eden where no passionate sorrow comes;
What light of cloud-pale breasts and breast-blossoms
And weary faces in the lotus bloom?
What sad red parted lips under the Tree
Of Knowledge hunger toward the bitter fruit,
While all the distance trembles with the bruit
Of Time's wings beating toward eternity?
What wave of moaning through the frondage rolls
When all the fragrant dusk is very still?
Why do the branches toss and weep at will
As if their sap were fed with human souls?

Come, let us go! Take up thy cross and bind
The crown of thorns upon thy brows again,
And we will seek the world of endless pain,
The tortured stars, the wild tormented wind,
The passionate heart-break of the world of strife
Where wrapt in Hell the soul looks up to Heaven;
Here Knowledge as a bride to Death is given,
The lotus blossoms on the Tree of Life.

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THE ROYAL VILLA AT OSTEND.

The Blood-Money of the Congo

By ROBERT E. PARK

Secretary of the Congo Reform Association

YOU have looked into the inmost secret treasure-house of Leopold the King—Leopold, the Philanthropist of the Congo and of Belgium!—you have learned the methods whereby he has coined into gold the sweat and blood of a dying people; you have watched mutilated men and women staggering under baskets of rubber beneath the lash of his armed and brutal sentries; you have seen fourscore severed hands, the mummied hands of his living victims, impaled on stakes before a smoking fire as evidence from his agents of duty well performed. And now, inevitably, you ask:

"What does it all mean? What becomes of this vast wealth, wrung from a nation's agony? Who benefits by its outpouring? It comes to him, millions of dollars of it, every year; where does it go, and what does its owner do with it?"

Where does it go, this blood-stained Congo gold? Into the fairy palaces, the wonderful gardens of enchantment in which this grim old, gray old king delights. Into the collections of rare and priceless trees and shrubs and flowers that have made his conservatories at Laeken famous throughout Europe. Into the white hands of the women who, each for her brief hour, have ruled the Congo's lord—the Queens of the Congo, whose jewels are bought with human lives. Into all the far-reaching schemes of aggrandizement which a most marvelous combination of wiliness, political sagacity, and selfish ambition can devise, and limitless wealth and a diabolic ability in choosing the proper tools can execute. And, lastly, into the huge machine—his gigantic Press Bureau—which is all that maintains Leopold's good name before the world; a machine grinding tirelessly, night

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and day, that its owner may pose as the Philanthropist, and not be exposed as the Vampire.

Nothing reveals him as the modern business King so plainly as does this mechanism, which involves the most highly perfected business methods of the twentieth century. Consider this aged monarch's position: very well he knows how fragile is his hold on the Congo Free State, and that as the Powers entrusted it to him, so they can take it away. Very well indeed he knows what danger threatens; for, carefully guarded as are the dark secrets of the Congo, little by little they leak out in the stories of missionaries and travelers. But between Leopold and this danger is the intangible but mighty protection of his realization of the great force of public opinion and his mastery of the art of swaying it through the press, founded, as that art must always be, on a deep knowledge of human nature. He knows—no psychologist better—how judgment is suspended when a missionary's story of atrocities is balanced by a contradictory one. He knows what stories allay suspicion, what carry strongest conviction; knows what to suppress, what to emphasize.

See for yourself his great machine in operation:

When Professor Cattier's book, which was the first to reveal to Belgians the actual situation in the Congo State, was published in Brussels, the Press Bureau learned that several reviews of it were about to appear in French newspapers. At this time the recent Morocco Conference was taking place at Algeciras; the situation was critical, and France was anxious for the assistance of even so small a power as Belgium. Leopold, who, it is said, was at Beaulieu with his latest inamorata, Baroness Vaughn, sent instructions to the Belgian representative at Algeciras. Shortly afterward, so the story goes, the latter met the French plenipotentiary, and in the course of conversation stated that he had just come from the German minister, Baron Radowitz, who had expressed surprise at the unfriendly attitude toward the Congo State maintained by some French papers, and had added: "We in Germany judge you less severely." Mention was made of M. Cattier's book, and the evil consequences which might result in France from his criticisms; and it was hinted, gently, that if Belgium were compelled to choose, she

SALON ON THE KING'S YACHT, ALBERTA.

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A CANNIBAL GUARD, PAID SOLDIER OF LEOPOLD IN THE CONGO.

might, in the end, feel it necessary to favor Germany against France. M. Revoil immediately cabled the gist of this conversation to the French Premier, M. Rouvier. The effect was instantaneous. M. Rouvier summoned the editors of certain newspapers and pointed out how matters stood. The reviews of M. Cattier's book were suppressed.

This story indicates but one phase of Leopold's scheme for misleading the public as to the true condition of affairs in the Congo Free State—the most stupendous system of advertising and hypocritical double-dealing that history can show, maintained at an enormous cost for the sole purpose of concealing the Crime of the Congo. This scheme was organized shortly before 1903, at the instigation of the King, by M. Dufourney and General Baron Wahis, Governor-General of the Congo Free State, as the "Federation for the Defense of Belgian Interests Abroad." The undertaking would have been entirely legitimate, save for the fact that Belgium has no "interests abroad," since she owns not a foot of foreign soil. It was simply and solely the King's monopolization of the Congo that was to be defended. Belgium, as a nation,

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Courtesy of the Theatre Magazine, New York.

CLEO DE MERODE, ONE OF THE KING'S PARISIAN FAVORITES

has no interest in the Congo, and does not care two straws about it.

The Federation prospered from its inception. A circular was sent to all Belgian Chambers of Commerce, to business, military, and professional men, urging them to uphold the King in his efforts to protect Belgium—and incidentally the Congo—from foreign interference. A few prominent men were quietly informed that they would be pleasing the King personally by allowing their names to appear on the circular. With this clear intimation that the King was behind it, therefore, countless industrial and business organizations—some of which have profited largely by the King's enterprise—enrolled themselves under the banner of the Federation.

At once, from the Central Offices of the latter, was issued a publication, in English, French, German, and Italian, entitled "The Truth About the Congo." This was sent, and is still sent, to every member of the French, English, Belgian, German, and Italian parliaments. The following extract from the first published circular of the Federation, in the light of subsequent events, is worth notice:

> Our sole weapon shall be truth. . . . Neither attacks upon foreign nations, nor mere idle polemics

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A SALON IN THE KING'S PALACE AT LAEKEN.
THE MOST LUXURIOUS ROYAL RESIDENCE ON THE CONTINENT.

Photograph by Russell & Sons, London, England.

E. D. MOREL, SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH CONGO REFORM ASSOCIATION.

ÉMILE VANDERVELDE, SOCIALIST DEPUTY IN BELGIAN PARLIAMENT, LEADER OF OPPOSITION TO THE KING.

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shall flow from our pen. . . . It is to the reason of our readers that we shall appeal, and not to political passion. Our task will be performed, and we shall disappear, when the general mind of the public shall have become enlightened.

But the distribution of circulars was not enough. It was necessary to get in direct touch with the people themselves, as well as with their representatives. An ingenious system of press subsidies and press-cutting operations was therefore organized; a Press Bureau on a mammoth scale, doing business all over the world—a vast machine, created by and run for the benefit of one man, deliberately and cold-bloodedly planned to deceive those whom it professed to enlighten.

The Bureau is directed from its Central Office, Rue Pepiniere, No. 41, Brussels, and is supported by the revenues obtained from the Domaine de la Couronne.* Its *modus operandi* is somewhat as follows, varying according to circumstances:

An article, perhaps descriptive of the Congo State, its railways, or its advance toward "civilization," is drafted in the Central Office, and submitted to the King's principal Congo secretaries, M. de Cuvelier or M. le Capitaine Liebrechts. Copies of it are then sent broadcast to all the newspapers that are subsidized or otherwise influenced by the Bureau, to the numerous European papers which deal with Colonial affairs, and to the American Sunday papers. Each copy is first translated into the language of the paper for which it is intended. In due time all this matter comes back to the Central Office in Brussels through the medium of the press-clipping bureaus. It is said that every such bureau in Europe and America is employed by Leopold. The clippings thus obtained are then used in the Federation's Bulletin as a genuine expression of editorial opinion, and from them a periodical is made up, printed in three languages, in three parallel columns. Here the matter contained in the clippings is so rehashed as to show the virtue and benevolence of the King and the ignorant perversity of those who oppose him. This periodical is then sent out to libraries, to institutions of learning, to influential persons everywhere, and especially to members of parliament in the different countries where the Congo is likely to come up for discussion.

Books dealing with the Congo question are sent out through the medium of the Press Bureau. A notable instance is "The Story of the Congo State," by Wellington Wack, which has been especially prepared for the United States and is gradually finding its way into most of the negro mission-schools of the South, and from which the negroes are being taught that Leopold is a benefactor of their race. Copies of the works of this agent of the King are to be found not only in all large libraries, but in most of the smaller ones as well. Consequently, when interest is aroused in regard to the Congo, and a reader goes to a library to consult an authority, he will always find a representative of the Press Bureau, so to speak, on guard. These books, and others like them, are splendidly advertised by the Press Bureau, and translations of them are sent all over the world.

Another book published and for a time widely circulated is a translation of the famous Report of the Commission of Inquiry of 1905. In the translation, this report has been softened and in certain parts deliberately falsified, but even as it stands is a terrible indictment of the Congo State. An account of what the Press Bureau did with this report in England is interesting—and highly suggestive.

A copy of the *Bulletin Officiel* of the Congo State was sent to the English papers by the "West African Missionary Association." It contained, in the vernacular, this Report of the Commission of Inquiry, and with it was what professed to be an epitome of the contents in English—"an accurate summarized version." Subsequent examination showed that this epitome had been first drawn up in French and then translated from French into English. It was most carefully compiled, and was even more mild than the very mild indictment of the Commission. Thus emasculated, the report had been given by the Brussels Press Bureau to a Roman Catholic priest, the head of a religious order to which King Leopold has been particularly generous; had been brought by him to England and distributed to the press as coming through the "West African Missionary Association." No such association is in existence. The majority of the papers published the convenient "translation"; but the London *Daily Chronicle*, instead of using the latter, translated the original document for itself, and thereby exposed the whole plot. The mischief, however, had been done; and English readers in general were left with a very inadequate idea of the Commission's report.

But the efforts of the Brussels Bureau to

* See "The Terrible Story of the Congo" in the December number.

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make use of the English press have not, in most cases, met with marked success. Nearly all the London and provincial editors have been approached, directly or indirectly; their offices have been flooded not only with the matter issued by the Federation and with articles sent out by the Press Bureau, but also with libelous communications directed against the reformers, and especially against Mr. Morel, who by his exposures of the true situation in the Congo has brought upon himself the implacable hatred of the "Congo crowd." The attitude of the *Times* alone has given rise to unfavorable comment. The fact that its Brussels correspondent is on friendly terms with King Leopold, together, possibly, with political reasons, may account to some extent for the benevolent neutrality observed by the *Times* toward Leopold and his works.

Leopold's right-hand man in England is Sir Alfred Jones, the president of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, consul of the Congo Free State at Liverpool, and partner of the King in the Cie Belgie Maritime du Congo, which is the ocean carrier for the Congo State. He has served the King well —but then his contract with the Congo State at the present time nets him annually, it is said, between $200,000 and $250,000. When Consul Casement's startling report of conditions in the Congo was received by the English Government, Sir Alfred was instructed by King Leopold to bring pressure to bear upon Lord Lansdowne to prevent its publication. Leopold added a warning in the shape of a scarcely veiled hint that public opinion in Belgium would be so incensed at the report that it would be impossible to continue the carrying contract with a British steamship company. But Lord Lansdowne was immovable and the report was published. Thereupon Leopold started off on his famous pilgrimage to the Courts of Europe, seeking to counteract the impression which the report could not fail to make.

Chief among Leopold's enemies are the missionaries. The various schemes by which he has sought to render their stories ineffective, and has made them serve his purposes, evidence almost incredible wiliness. For instance, by clever juggling he made it appear at one time that the English agitation for Congo reform was an anti-Catholic movement; hence Roman Catholicism was invited to attack it. An arrangement made with the Vatican twenty years ago that the Congo field should be reserved chiefly for the Belgian orders, was proof sufficient of his farsightedness, for it made control of these orders, as Belgian subjects, comparatively easy. The wisdom of this precaution was proved when the atrocities perpetrated in the Congo were openly denounced by the Protestant missionaries, and the Roman Catholic press came promptly to Leopold's support. Since that time, however, the Catholic world has come to understand Leopold's nefarious schemes and has turned against him.

Another instance shows the English Baptist Missionary Society victimized. In January, 1903, after the world had commenced to concern itself with Congo abuses, Leopold succeeded in persuading representatives of this society to cross the channel and read an address thanking him for the protection he had given their work in the lower section of the Free State. He received them with all the formality and ceremony befitting an embassy from a foreign Power. Of course the Press Bureau heralded this event to the ends of the earth, and the English Baptist Missionary Society found itself in the position of having given public indorsement to what it has since learned to regard as an intolerable iniquity.

Early in his campaign of defense, Leopold realized the necessity of operations in the United States, where official action is easily controlled by public opinion. Accordingly, in 1902 came one James Gustavus Whiteley, an American and the present Consul-General of the Congo at Baltimore, to be Leopold's first press agent in America. When in 1904 it was proposed to discuss at the Peace Congress at Boston the international status of the Congo State, Mr. Whiteley was given the official title of the Congo Consul. It was said that he was appointed "to promote good relations between the United States and the Congo," there being absolutely no trade between the two countries to serve as excuse for his official being.

To resist the effort to have the subject of the Congo presented to the Peace Congress, Leopold sent a personal embassy. It was on this occasion that August Belmont, who, with the Rothschilds, had given the King's Press Bureau a somewhat perfunctory support, wrote a personal letter to certain New York newspapers, asking them to suspend judgment until the King's representatives arrived with "The Truth About the Congo," which they were bringing by freight.

The personal embassy consisted of Mr.

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George Head, Dr. Sarolea, and Professor Nerincx. Mr. Head, who worked through lectures on the Congo, secured a room in Tremont Temple, where the Peace Congress was held, on the day when the Congo was discussed, and, with a cleverness worthy his employer, he contrived to make his lectures appear merely a continuation of the sessions of the Peace Congress. Both he and Professor Nerincx remained here, endeavoring by lectures and other means to convince the American public that no matter what might be the actual conditions in the Congo, none of the Powers, and least of all the United States, has the right to interfere.

In addition to these means of protecting his interests, and to his manipulation of the press, Leopold has for two years made the Belgian embassy in Washington little less than his Congo lobby; and the Belgian minister, Baron Moncheur, has, in public and in private, devoted himself unremittingly to the King's personal enterprise in Africa.

To the credit of the American press and people, it may be said that all these efforts have not met with much more of success here than in England, though an amazing amount of confusion has been created in the public mind of both countries—and confusion serves Leopold's interests only second to corruption. In addition, now that American interest in the Congo has risen to a point that might well cause its autocrat fresh alarm, he has fortified himself by conceding 8,400,000 acres of the richest rubber country in the world to a French-American-English company whose American head is that astute financier, Thomas F. Ryan. Upon this powerful ally Leopold depends to prevent the consideration of the Congo situation in the coming Congress.

In 1898 Leopold secured the adoption of his own colonial policy in the neighboring French possession, a territory some 600,000 square miles in extent, known as the *Congo français*. His object in this was clear enough. It has been explained that in the Congo controversy the main issue has been the claim of Leopold and his personal friends to the absolute ownership of the soil, the produce of the soil, and the labor of the peoples of Central Africa. If one of the great Powers also having possessions in the Congo could be induced to put forward the same claims of ownership, it was obvious that Leopold would find himself in a much stronger position at the final day of reckoning, since he could say: "You also are being attacked—we must make common cause against our common critics."

Thanks to the influence of the Chief of the French Colonial Party, M. Eugène Etienne, the Minister for War in the present French cabinet, Leopold gained his ends. The territory of the *Congo français* was parcelled out into forty-four concessionaire companies, which were given absolute ownership of the land and the natives. Although floated as French concerns, these companies, with very few exceptions, were financed and controlled from Belgium. The combined results of the wiliness of Leopold and the shortsightedness of the French have been extraordinary. The French Congo has been handed over to the mercy of the King's adherents, who have secured for thirty years the right to pillage the enormous areas conceded to them. In thirty years' time the French Congo will be ruined for generations. France is getting absolutely nothing for her share of the bargain save a slight increase of revenue from the export duty on the increased quantities of rubber which are going out of the country—and this revenue, for the most part, is absorbed in the military expenditure required to suppress the perpetually recurrent native outbreaks. The rubber exported from the country does not even pass through French hands or give employment to French artisans. Ninety-nine per cent. of it is shipped to Antwerp, and is disposed of in that port. The shares of these Concessions are not even quoted on the Paris Bourse and are never mentioned in the French financial papers. On the other hand, the Antwerp Bourse and the financial organs of Brussels and Antwerp deal in them largely.

The French press has maintained silence not only in regard to the atrocities in the Congo State, but also in regard to those which followed the adoption of the concessionaire system in the French Congo. Reports of an appalling nature poured in to successive colonial ministers, and were suppressed. Several Paris papers got hold of them, and were either ordered to keep silence or were bribed to do so. At length the truth could no longer be kept back. The result last year, as all the world knows, was a series of frightful disclosures. But through corruption, peculation, and bribery, the evils have been permitted to go on unchecked.

In Italy the situation is somewhat different.

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Here, in addition to subsidizing the press, Leopold has made use of the Italian army as a tool for his own interests. By inducing Italy to lend him enough of her officers to command his African army, he has been enabled to say, when the exploits of that army were denounced in England: "Observe these outrageous attacks upon the honor of your officers. My cause, through them, is your cause; we must stand together."

All this has been changed, however, within the last few months. The reports of Italian officers as to the duties assigned them in the Congo State, their resignations, and their protests, have led to fierce debates in the House, and to the revolt of the more reputable organs of public opinion against Leopold and his gold. The charges of attempts to poison him, brought by Captain Baccari, envoy from the King of Italy to the Congo, have also contributed to arouse public sentiment. Yielding therefore to pressure, Italy has determined that no more of her officers shall be permitted to go to the Congo. Within the coming year the last of the Italian officers will have left their Congo stations, and Italy will have washed her hands of the King of the Congo and his works.

This is the machine, huge, and grinding tirelessly night and day, of which the wheels are oiled by blood and the motive power is that endless stream of Congo gold. What it costs him—surely an appalling sum!—is the King's secret, and his alone. He must have many secrets, the Philanthropist!

And the rest of the Congo blood-money?

Into the palaces, the chateaux, the gardens which Leopold is forever constructing or laying out, goes a steady stream of his Congo gold. At Brussels, Ostend, Villefranche, Cape Ferrat—wherever he has made his residence, he has been constantly engaged in remodeling and changing. He has spent 30,000,000 francs in rebuilding and embellishing his palace at Laeken, which in 1890 was burned almost to the ground. This palace is the most luxurious royal residence on the Continent, and the plans of its present form were drawn up by the king himself. Some of the priceless treasures which were destroyed during the fire can never, of course, be replaced—for instance, the Gobelin tapestries, worth several million francs, which were sent by Marie Antoinette of France to her sister, the Archduchess Marie Christian. Its collections of porcelains, statuary, miniatures, and portraits are famous throughout Europe. Here is kept the gold and silver plate which, it is said, not even the collection at Windsor can surpass in beauty and costliness. At state banquets the courses are served alternately upon gold and silver.

In order that the king may come and go quietly, as he wills, there has been constructed a tunnel, connecting the railway with the palace, by means of which his Majesty is enabled to step from the house into his private car. It was built at a cost of 3,000,000 francs by the Belgian State, which owns the railways, as a personal favor to the king. In return, when the Belgian House refused to vote the necessary sum for the erection of an arch to commemorate the independence of Belgium, Leopold subscribed 5,000,000 francs.

These silent flittings of the king, to which he is greatly given, have at times been found inconvenient by his ministers, who have supposed their sovereign hard at work in his study until his whereabouts were reported in some remote corner of the world. It is told that once, when his ministers had found themselves unable to gain access to him, they were suddenly astounded by reading a press account of the arrival in the Mediterranean of the royal yacht, with the king and his three daughters on board. Glowing descriptions followed of their public reception at the various ports at which they touched. As the three princesses were at home in the palace at the time, the affair, in the light of the king's well-known proclivities for unconventional amusements, took on a sufficiently lurid hue. To prevent scandal more than usually flagrant, the princesses shut themselves up in the palace, where they remained until their father saw fit to appear again, as quietly and unexpectedly as he had vanished. The "daughters" in the case were three actresses whose names were bywords on the boulevards of Paris.

One of the more innocent extravagances of the king is a hobby for collecting rare plants and flowers from all parts of the world. The glass houses at Laeken are famous all over Europe. In the midst of these conservatories stands one of the most unique churches in existence. It is circular in form, topped by a dome of glass which is supported by twenty granite columns. In the spaces between these columns stand statues of the twelve apostles. Strange flowers bloom here,

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making splashes of vivid color amid the gleaming of gold and silver candlesticks and sacred vessels; growing palms embower the plain stone altar, and from the heart of the greenery above it flames a great electric cross. Vines festoon the carven gallery of the choir; mingled with the breath of incense is the heavy perfume of exotics. Birds fly from branch to branch above the heads of worshipers, flitting in and out among the shrines of painted saints.

Where the king got his fondness for collecting Japanese pagodas no one seems to know. But collect them he does, in all materials, bronze, porcelain, gold, ebony, ivory, and silver, in all sizes, from the miniature creations of the beautiful Japanese art to the great structure which stands in the park at Laeken. This is the celebrated Japanese tower, pagoda-shaped, and hung with electric globes, which cost the king two million francs. Rumor has it that this fantastic structure is an extravagance of luxury, filled with rare and precious things, curios, and objects of art from the four corners of the earth, from which no one derives the smallest benefit save the king himself. For no one enters here without Leopold's express permission—and this mandate applies, brusquely and specifically, to "women, photographers, and newspaper men."

Other estates and extravagances has Leopold, to absorb still more of the gold which comes to him so easily—his villa at Villefranche, overlooking the Mediterranean, with its wonderful landscape gardens and also—in illustration of the practical temper of its owner—a vast kitchen garden, laid out under the personal superintendence of the king, where he raises his own vegetables to supply his table. Until recently he was principal owner of the great gambling establishments at Ostend and Spa. It was said that he intended the former to outrival in magnificence even Monte Carlo. Five million dollars have lately been spent in Ostend, on improvements of the grounds and buildings.

At Cape Ferrat Leopold is building a sanitarium for those of his Congo employees who become invalided in the service. At the Park of Tervueren, just outside Brussels, he has also under way a vast Congo museum, which, when completed, will cost 30,000,000 francs.

Ever on the alert for new sensations, Leopold has taken up with avidity each new fad as it has come into fashion. He rides; he used to bicycle; he motors; and among his machines he has an immense touring automobile, containing a bedroom and a kitchen, exquisitely appointed.

One must admit that the maintenance of a private press bureau and the passion for building palaces, museums, and gambling-hells on a grandiose scale are expensive tastes. Yet Leopold by no means confines himself to these. Yearly he spends untold thousands upon the women of the half-world who chance to please his fancy—the Queens of the Congo, whose jewels are bought with human lives.

There was an obscure little Parisienne, a ballet-dancer, slender, dark-eyed, with the face of a Madonna—called Cléo de Merode. Upon a night Leopold saw her from his box—and made her the talk of two continents. She was only a little white rat of the theatre, demure, with dark hair drawn low over her ears, and a pale beauty of which she was fully aware; but he made her the queen of the glittering tinsel world of Paris. He paved the way for more magnificent gifts by a trifle in the shape of a pearl necklace worth $100,000. Such jewels, such furs, such flowers, such equipages, were lavished upon the little danseuse, with her Perugino eyes and her Botticelli hair, that even Paris, the *mondaine*, was forced to sit up and gasp.

There was Madame d'Esteffe, on whom a caustic-tipped French pen first fastened the title of Queen of the Congo. For this reason:

Madame had set her heart upon a particularly valuable diamond necklace, but at that time the Congo was not the paying venture it has since become. One day she mentioned to the king a suggestion made to her by certain Congo adventurers. This was that the king should capitalize his rights to collect tribute from the natives, and in this way obtain the money necessary for carrying on the exploitation of the Congo on a grand scale. It is to be hoped that she had no notion to what her suggestion might lead, for this was the origin of that Concessionaire system which has wrought such havoc in the heart of Africa. Thus, it is added, Madame got her diamonds, and Leopold, his idea.

Lastly, there is the reigning favorite, "Baroness Vaughn"—daughter of a janitor at Budapest, sister of a fruit-seller of Paris—clear-eyed, fair-faced, with masses of chestnut hair. She is known as the king's "morganatic wife."

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Royalty is badly handicapped in its amours, as well as in its *affaires du cœur*, since it is ever under the magnifying glass of public opinion. But making all allowance possible, the fact remains that the scandals attached to Leopold's name have added nothing to his popularity. Even among his royal confrères this holds good. Queen Victoria especially detested him, and never received him save when she could not help it, and then only officially.

Were it not for his treatment of his family, one might feel a vagrant pity for him, restless, selfish, and cynical as he is, for it is written that he shall possess nothing but what his gold may buy him. With all his palaces, he has no home; with all his adventures, he has never had a romance.

The Queen of Belgium died deserted and alone, so far as husband and children were concerned. Once she left him, unable to endure longer his insults and neglect, and returned to him, unwillingly, only after long persuasion by friends and ministers, who pleaded for "the good of the state." Once she attempted suicide. Of his daughters, two are notorious—Louise, wife of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and Stephanie, who married Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria-Hungary—the third and youngest, Clémentine, is a victim of moping melancholia, whose chief longing in life is to take the veil and escape from what she cannot remedy.

There is not a public man in Europe who has shown himself more indifferent to his personal reputation than has Leopold. In his relations with his wife and children as well as with his mistresses he has evidenced the same callous and contemptuous disregard of public opinion. He made away with every florin of his wife's dowry. He refused to be reconciled to his daughters at the time of their mother's death, and even refused them permission to visit her dead body at Spa, or to take part with him in the funeral ceremonies.

Few people know that this hard-headed man of many businesses is troubled by a superstition. He and his daughters have a superstitious dread of the last two weeks in January. During that period nearly all the misfortunes of his life, by an odd coincidence, have overtaken him. While still Duke of Brabant, before his accession to Belgium's throne, he lost his only son, who died after a mysteriously sudden illness. Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, the king's son-in-law, met his violent and mysterious death in the hunting lodge at Meyerling, in the latter part of the king's month of fate. In January, 1890, the palace at Laeken burned, and Princess Clémentine, who barely escaped with her life, was so overwrought by the sight of her governess perishing in the flames that for many months it was feared she would lose her reason in precisely the same manner in which Leopold's only sister, the ex-Empress Carlotta, lost hers. The latter's definite insanity also, curiously enough, dates from January.

This, then, is Leopold, financier, and roué, but never philanthropist, not as he would show himself to the world, but as the world is beginning to see him. What has he done for Belgium? Given her a few public buildings, for which she pays, since they are the property of the state, and of which he receives the use and benefit, minus the expense; promised her future gifts when he himself shall have finished with them.

What part is Belgium getting in the king's Congo wealth? No part at all. It goes, as we have seen, into the press bureau which proclaims his virtue to a credulous world; into his private enterprises, into the hands of courtesans and favorites. That is all. The power he has built up is the power of Leopold, not the power of Belgium. He has not scrupled to hoodwink and blind her as shamelessly as he has deceived the world.

Not in the interests of the state nor of civilization has he pushed his gigantic schemes, for these mean nothing to him. What will happen to them when he is through he neither knows nor cares. He has played his game well, the Hypocrite. But the cloak is being stripped from him; he stands forth a king without honor, despised, sneered at. What will the world do with him, now that it sees him as he is? That is a question which the world alone can answer. But, if the Congo's blood is not to stain still another page of history, the question must be answered soon.

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Issy and "The Other"

By JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

Author of "Mr. Pratt," "Cap'n Eri," etc.

Illustrations by Will Grefé

ISSY—his name was Issachar Ulysses Grant McKay—sat upon the heap of rusty chain cable outside the blacksmith's shop at Eastboro, reading a love-story. Inside the shop the blacksmith was busy fitting an iron quahaug-rake to its handle. For eighteen-year-old Issy—though by choice a dreamer of dreams and a reader of cheap literature—was from stern necessity a quahauger by profession, and, in his power-boat, the Lady May, made daily pilgrimages to the shoals off Wellmouth, his native village, where he separated the reluctant bivalve from its muddy home on the sea-bottom with a forty-foot rake. Yesterday the rake had broken, and Issy had this morning come over, in the Lady May, to Eastboro—which is the village eight miles above Wellmouth—to get a new one. While the blacksmith was busy with the rake Issy laboriously spelled out the harrowing chapters of "Vivian, the Shop Girl; or, Lord Lyndhurst's Lowly Love."

A grinning, freckled face peered cautiously around the corner of the blacksmith's front fence. Then an overripe apple whizzed through the air and burst against the shop-wall a few inches from the reader's head. Issy jumped.

"You—you everlastin' young ones, you!" he shouted fiercely. "If I git my hands on to you, you'll wish you'd— I see you hidin' behind that fence."

Two barefooted little figures danced provokingly in the roadway and two shrill voices chanted in derision:

"Is McKay—Is McKay—
Makes the Injuns run away!

Scalped anybody lately, Issy?"

Alas for the indiscretions of youth! At the age of thirteen, Issy, after a course of reading in the "Deadwood Dick Library," had started on a pedestrian journey to the Far West, where, being armed with home-made scalping-knife and tomahawk, he contemplated extermination of the noble red man. A wrathful pursuing parent had collared the exterminator at this very village of Eastboro, to the huge delight of its inhabitants; since which time Issy had been famous, in a way.

"If I git a-holt of you kids, I'll bet there'll be some scalpin' done," retorted the persecuted one, rising from the heap of cable.

A second apple burst like a bombshell on the shingles behind him. Mr. McKay was a good general, in that he knew when it was wisest to retreat. Shoving the paper novel into his overalls pocket, he entered the shop.

"What's the matter, Is?" inquired the grinning blacksmith. Most people grinned when they spoke to Issy. "Gittin' too hot outside there, was it? Why don't you tomahawk 'em and have 'em for supper?"

"Humph!" grunted the offended quahauger. "Don't git gay now, Jake Larkin. You hurry up with that rake."

"Oh, all right, Is. Don't sculp *me;* I ain't done nothin'. What's the news over to Wellmouth? City folks all gone?"

"Course they have. Don't cal'late they goin' to spend the winter, do ye? Sam Bartlett he started for Boston this mornin'."

"Who? Sam Bartlett? I want to know! Thought he was down for three weeks. You sure about that, Is?"

"Course I'm sure. I was up to the depot and see him buy his ticket and git on the cars."

"Did, hey? Humph! So Sam's gone. Gertie Cummings still over to her Aunt Hannah's at Trumet?"

Issy looked at his questioner. "Why, yes," he said suspiciously. "I s'pose she's there. Fact, I know she is. Pat Starkey,

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the freight agent, 's doin' the telegraphin' while she's away. What made you ask that?"

The blacksmith chuckled. "Oh, nothin';" he said. "How's her dad's dyspepsy? Had any more of them sudden attacks of his? I cal'late they'll take the old man off some of these days, won't they? I hear the doctor thinks there's more heart than stomach in them attacks."

But the skipper of the Lady May was not to be put off thus. "What you drivin' at, Jake?" he demanded. "What's Sam Bartlett's goin' away got to do with Gertie Cummings?"

In his eagerness he stepped to Mr. Larkin's side. The blacksmith caught sight of the novel in his customer's pocket. He snatched it forth.

"What you readin' now, Is?" he demanded. "More blood and brimstone? 'Vivy Ann, the Shop Girl'! Gee! Wow!"

AN OVERRIPE APPLE BURST AGAINST THE SHOP-WALL.

"You gimme that book, Jake Larkin! Gimme it now!"

Fending the frantic quahauger off with one mighty arm, the blacksmith proceeded to read aloud:

"'Darlin',' cried Lord Lyndhurst, strainin' the beautiful and blushin' maid to his manly bosom, 'you are mine at last. Mine! No—' Jerushy! a love-story! Why, Issy! I didn't know you was in love. Who's the lucky girl? Send me an invite to your weddin', won't you?"

Issy's face was a fiery red. He tore the precious volume from its desecrator's hand, losing the pictured cover in the struggle.

"You—you pesky fool!" he shouted. "You mind your own business."

The blacksmith roared in glee. "Oh, ho!" he cried. "Issy's in love and I never guessed it. Aw, say, Is, don't be mean! Who is she? Have you strained her to your manly bosom yit? What's her name?"

"Shut up!" shrieked Issy and strode out of the shop. His tormentor begged him not to "go off mad" and shouted sarcastic sympathy after him. But Mr. McKay heeded not. He stalked angrily along the sidewalk. Then espying just ahead of him the boys who had thrown the apples, he paused, turned, and walking down the carriageway at the side of the blacksmith's place of business, sat down upon a sawhorse under one of its rear windows. He could, at least, be alone here and think; and he wanted to think.

For Issy—although he didn't look it—was deeply interested in another love-story as well as that in his pocket. This one was printed upon his heart's pages, and in it he was the hero, while the heroine—the unsuspecting heroine—was Gertie Cummings, daughter of Captain Abner Cummings, once a fisherman, now the grouty and dyspeptic depot-master at Wellmouth.

This story began when Issy first acquired the Lady May. The Cummings home stood on the slope close to the boat-landing, and when Issy came in from quahauging, Gertie was likely to be in the back yard, hanging out the clothes or watering the flower garden. Sometimes she spoke to him of her

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own accord, concerning the weather or other important topics. Once she even asked him if he were going to the Fourth of July ball at the town hall. It took him until the next morning—like other warriors, Issy was cursed with shyness—to summon courage enough to ask her to go to the ball with him. Then he found it was too late; she was going with her cousin, Lennie Bloomer. But he felt that she had offered him the opportunity, and was happy and hopeful accordingly.

This, however, was before she went to Boston to study telegraphy. When she returned, with a picture hat and a Boston accent, it was to preside at the telegraph-instrument in the little room adjoining the ticket-office at her father's station. A middle-aged housekeeper with the unromantic name of 'Tildy Ginn took her place at the flower garden and the clothes-line, and when Issy bowed blushingly outside the window of the telegraph-room, he received only the airiest of frigid nods. Was there what Lord Lyndhurst would have called "another"? It would seem not. Old Captain Abner, her father, encouraged no bows nor attentions from young men, and Gertie herself did not appear to desire them. So Issy gave up his tales of savage butchery for those of love and blisses, adored in silence, and hoped—always hoped.

"YOU GIMME THAT BOOK, JAKE LARKIN!"

But why had the blacksmith seemed surprised at the departure of Sam Bartlett, the "dudey" vacationist from the city, whose father had, years ago, been Captain Abner's partner in the fish business? And why had he coupled the Bartlett name with that of Miss Cummings, who, for the past ten days, had been visiting her father's maiden sister at Trumet, the village next below Wellmouth, as Eastboro is the next above it? Issy's suspicions were aroused, and he wondered.

Suddenly he heard voices in the shop above him. The window was open and he heard them plainly.

"Well! *well!*" It was the blacksmith who uttered the exclamation. "Why, Bartlett, how be you? What you doin' over here? Thought you'd gone back to Boston. I heard you had."

Slowly, cautiously, the astonished quahauger rose from the sawhorse and peered over the window-sill. There were two visitors in the shop. One was Ed Burns, proprietor of the Eastboro Hotel and livery-stable. The other was Sam Bartlett, the very same who had left Wellmouth that morning, bound, ostensibly, for Boston. Issy sank back again and listened.

"Yes, yes!" he heard Sam say impatiently; "I know, but—see here, Jake, where can I hire a horse in this God-forsaken town?"

"Well, well, Sam!" continued Larkin. "I was just figurin' that Cap'n Ab had got the best of you after all, and you'd had to give it up for this time. Thinks I, it's too bad! Just because your dad and Cap'n Ab had such a deuce of a row when they bust up in the fish trade, it's a shame that the Cap'n won't hark to your keepin' comp'ny with Gertie. And you doin' so well; makin' twenty dollars a week up to the city—Ed told me that—and——"

"Yes, yes! But never mind that. Where can I get a horse? I've got to be in Trumet by eight to-night sure."

"Trumet? Why, that's where Gertie is, ain't it?"

"Look-a-here, Jake," broke in the livery-stable keeper. "I'll tell you how 'tis. Oh, it's all right, Sam! Jake knows the most of it; I told him. He can keep his mouth shut, and he don't like old crank Cummings any better'n you and me do. Jake, Sam here and Gertie had fixed it up to run off and git married to-night. He was to pretend to

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start for Boston this mornin'. Bought a ticket and all, so's to throw the Cap'n off the scent. He was to git off the train here at Eastboro and I was to let him have a horse 'n' buggy. Then, this afternoon, he was goin' to drive through the wood roads around to Trumet and be at the Baptist church there at eight to-night sharp. Gertie's Aunt Hannah, she's had her orders, and bein' as big a crank as her brother, she don't let the girl out of her sight. But there's a fair at the church and auntie's tendin' a table. Gertie, she steps out to the cloak-room to git a handkerchief which she's forgot; see? And she hops into Sam's buggy and away they go to the minister's. After they're once hitched Old Dyspepsy can go to pot and see the kittle bile."

"Bully! By gum, that's fine! Won't Abner rip some, hey?"

"Yes, but there's the dickens to pay. I've only got two horses in the stable. Put out all the rest for their winter's keep and they're all busy salt-hayin' or cartin' cranberries. And the two I've got—one's old Bill, and he couldn't go twenty mile to save his hide. And t'other's the gray mare, and blamed if she didn't git cast last night and use up her off hind leg so's she can't step. And Sam's *got* to have a horse. Where can I git one?"

"Hum! Have you tried Haynes's?"

"Yes, yes! And Lathrop's and Eldredge's. Can't git a team for love nor money."

"Sho! And he can't go by train?"

"What? With Cap'n Ab depot-master at Wellmouth and always nosin' through every car that stops there? You can't fetch Trumet by train without stoppin' at Wellmouth and— What was that?"

"I don't know. What was it?"

"Sounded like somethin' outside that back winder."

The two ran to the window and looked out. All they saw was an overturned sawhorse and two or three hens scratching vigorously.

"Guess 'twas the chickens, most likely," observed the blacksmith. Then, striking his blackened palms together, he exclaimed:

"By time! I've thought of somethin'! Is McKay is in town to-day. Come over in the Lady May. She's a first-class gasoline-boat. Is would take Sam to Trumet for two or three dollars, I'll bet. And he's such a foolhead that he wouldn't ask questions nor suspicion nothin'. 'Twould be faster'n a horse and enough sight less risky."

And just then the "foolhead," his brain whirling under its carroty thatch, was hurrying blindly up the main street, bound somewhere, he wasn't certain where.

A mushy apple exploded between his shoulders, but he did not even turn around. So *this* was what the blacksmith meant! This was why the Captain watched his daughter so closely. This was why Gertie had been sent off to Trumet. She had met the Bartlett miscreant in Boston; they had been together there; had fallen in love and— He gritted his teeth and shook his fists almost in the face of old Deacon Pratt, who, knowing the McKay penchant for slaughter, had serious thoughts of sending for the constable.

Captain Abner must be warned, of course, but how? To telegraph was to put Pat Starkey in possession of the secret, and Pat was too good a friend of Gertie's to be trusted. There was no telephone at the station. Issy entered the combination grocery store and post-office.

"Has the down mail closed yet?" he panted.

The postmaster looked out of his little window.

"Yes," he replied. "Why? Got a letter you want to go? Take it up to the depot. The train's due, but 'tain't here yit. If you run you can make it."

Issy took a card from his pocket. It was the business card of the firm to whom he sold his quahaugs. On the back of the card he wrote in pencil as follows:

"Captain Abner Cummings, your daughter Gertrude is going to meet Sam'l Bartlett at the Baptist church in Trumet at 8 P.M. to-night and get married to him. LOOK OUT!!!"

After an instant's consideration he signed it "A True Friend," this being in emulation of certain heroes of the Deadwood Dick variety. Then he put the card into an envelope and ran at top speed to the railway station. The train came in as he reached the platform. The baggage-master was standing in the door of his car.

"Here, mister!" panted Issy. "Jest hand this letter to Cap'n Abner Cummings when you git to Wellmouth, won't you? It's mighty important. Don't forgit. Thanks."

The train moved off. Issy stared after it, grinning malevolently. The Captain would get that note in ample time to send word to the watchful Aunt Hannah. When the

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unsuspecting eloper reached the Trumet church, it would be the aunt, not the niece, who awaited him. Still grinning, Mr. McKay walked off the platform, and into the arms of Ed Burns, the stable-keeper, and Sam Bartlett, his loathed and favored rival.

"Here he is!" shouted Burns. "Now we've got him."

The foiler of the plot turned pale. Was his secret discovered? But no; his captors began talking eagerly, and gradually the sense of their pleadings became plain. They wanted him—*him*, of all people—to convey Bartlett to Trumet in the Lady May.

"You see it's a business meetin'," urged Burns. "Sam's got to be there by ha'f-past seven or he'll—he won't win out on the deal, will you, Sam? Say yes, Issy; that's a good feller. He'll give you—I don't know's he won't give you five dollars."

"Ten," cried Bartlett. "And I'll never forgit it either. Will you, Is?"

A mighty "No!" was trembling on Issy's tongue. But before it was uttered Burns spoke again.

"McKay's got the best boat in these parts," he urged. "She's got a tip-top engine in her, and——"

The word "engine" dropped into the whirlpool of Issy's thoughts with a familiar sound. In the chapter of "Vivian" that he had just finished, the beautiful shop-girl was imprisoned on board the yacht of the millionaire kidnapper, while the hero, in his own yacht, was miles astern. But the hero's faithful friend, disguised as a stoker, was tampering with the villain's engine. A vague idea began to form in Issy's brain. Once get the would-be eloper aboard the Lady May, and, even though Cap'n Abner's warning note should remain undelivered, he——

Issy smiled, and the ghastliness of that smile was unnoticed by his companions.

"I—I'll do it," he cried. "By mighty! I *will* do it. You be at the wharf here at four o'clock. I wouldn't do it for everybody, Sam Bartlett, but for you I'd do consider'ble, just now. And I don't want your ten dollars nuther."

Doctoring an engine may be easy enough—in stories. But to doctor a gasoline-engine so that it will run for a certain length of time and *then* break down is not so easy. Three o'clock came and the problem was still unsolved. Issy, the perspiration running down his face, stood up in the Lady May's cockpit and looked out across the bay, smooth and glassy in the afternoon sun.

The sky overhead was clear and blue, but along the eastern and southern horizon was a gray bank of cloud, heaped in tumbled masses.

A sunburned lobsterman in rubber boots and a sou'wester was smoking on the wharf.

"What time you goin' to start for home, Is?" he asked.

"Oh, in an hour or so," was the absent-minded reply.

"Humph! You'd better cast off afore that or you'll be fog-bound. It'll be thicker'n dock mud toward sundown and you'll fetch up in Harniss 'stead of Wellmouth, 'thout you've got a good compass."

ISSY STARED AFTER THE TRAIN, GRINNING MALEVOLENTLY.

"Oh, my compass is all right," began Issy, and stopped short. The lobsterman made other attempts at conversation, but they were unproductive. McKay was gazing at the growing fog-bank and thinking hard. To

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doctor an engine may be difficult, but to get lost in a fog— He took the compass from the glass-lidded binnacle by the wheel, and carrying it into the little cabin, placed it in the cuddy forward.

It was nearer five than four when the Lady May, her engine barking aggressively, moved out of Eastboro harbor. Mr. Bartlett, the passenger, had been on time and had fumed and fretted at the delay. But Issy was deliberation itself. He had forgotten his quahaug-rake, and the lapse of memory entailed a trip to the blacksmith's. Then the gasoline-tank needed filling and the battery had to be overhauled.

"Are you sure you can make it?" queried Sam anxiously. "It's important, I tell you. Mighty important."

The skipper snorted in disgust. "Make it?" he repeated. "If the Lady May can't make fourteen mile in two hours—let alone two'n a ha'f—then I don't know her. She's one of them boats you read about, she is."

The Cape makes a wide bend between Eastboro and Trumet. The distance between these towns is twenty long, curved miles over the road; by water it is reduced to a straight fourteen. And midway between the two, at the center of the curve, is Wellmouth.

The Lady May coughed briskly on. There was no sea and she sent long, widening ripples from each side of her bow. Bartlett, leaning over the rail, gazed impatiently ahead. Issy, sprawled on the bench by the wheel, was muttering to himself. Occasionally he glanced toward the east. The gray fog-bank was now half-way to the zenith and approaching rapidly. The eastern shore had disappeared.

"Is! Hi, Is! What are you doing? Don't kill him before my eyes."

Issy came out of his trance with a start.

"What—what's that?" he asked. His passenger was grinning broadly.

"What? Kill who?"

"Why, the big chief, or whoever you had under your knee just then. You've been rolling your eyes and punching air with your fist for the last five minutes. I was getting scared. You're an unmerciful sinner when you get started, ain't you, Is? Who was the victim that time? 'Man Afraid of Hot Water'? or who?"

The skipper scowled. He shoved the fist into his pocket.

"Naw," he growled. "'Twa'n't."

"So? Not an Indian? Then it must have been a white man. Some fellow after your girl, perhaps. Hey?"

The disconcerted Issy was speechless. His companion's chance shot had scored a bull's-eye. Sam whooped.

"That's it!" he crowed. "Sure thing! Give it to him, Is! Don't spare him."

Mr. McKay chokingly admitted that he "wa'n't goin' to."

"Ho, ho! That's the stuff! But who's *she*, Is? When are you going to marry her?"

Issy grunted spitefully. "You ain't married yourself—not yit," he observed, with concealed sarcasm.

The unsuspecting Bartlett laughed in triumph. "No," he said. "I'm not, that's a fact; but maybe I'm going to be some of these days. It looked pretty dubious for a while, but now it's all right."

"'Tis, hey? You're sure about that, be you?"

"Guess I am. Great Scott! what's that? Fog?"

A damp breath blew across the boat. The clouds covered the sky overhead and the bay to port. The fog was pouring like smoke across the water.

"Fog, by thunder!" exclaimed Bartlett.

Issy smiled. "Hum! Yes, 'tis fog, ain't it?" he observed.

"But what'll we do? It'll be here in a minute, won't it?"

"Shouldn't be a mite surprised. Looks 's if 'twas here now."

The fog came on. It reached the Lady May, passed over her, and shut her within gray, wet walls. It was impossible to see a length from her side. Sam swore emphatically. The skipper was provokingly calm. He stepped to the engine, bent over it, and then returned to the wheel.

"What are you doing?" demanded Bartlett.

"Slowin' down, of course. Can't run more'n ha'f-speed in a fog like this. 'Tain't safe."

"Safe! What do I care? I want to get to Trumet."

"Yes? Well, maybe we'll git there if we have luck."

"You idiot! We've *got* to get there. How can you tell which way to steer? Get your compass, man! get your compass!"

"Ain't got no compass," was the sulky answer. "Left it to home."

"Why, no, you didn't. I——"

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"WHAT IS IT? WHO IS IT? WHAT *IS* THE MATTER?"

"I tell you I did. 'Twas careless of me, I know, but——"

"But I say you didn't. When you went up-town after that quahaug-rake I explored this craft of yours some. The compass is in that little closet at the end of the cabin. I'll get it."

He rose to his feet. Issy sprang forward and seized him by the arm.

"Set down!" he yelled. "Who's runnin' this boat, you or me?"

The astounded passenger stared at his companion.

"Why, you are," he replied. "But that's no reason— What's the matter with you, anyway? Have your dime novels driven you loony?"

Issy hesitated. For a moment chagrin and rage at this sudden upset of his schemes had gotten the better of his prudence. But Bartlett was taller than he and broad in proportion. And valor—except of the imaginative brand—was not Issy's strong point.

"There, there, Sam!" he explained, smiling crookedly. "You mustn't mind me. I'm sort of nervous, I guess. And you mustn't hop up and down in a boat that way. You set still and I'll fetch the compass."

He stumbled across the cockpit and disappeared in the dusk of the cabin. Finding that compass took a long time. Sam lost patience.

"What's the matter?" he demanded. "Can't you find it? Shall I come?"

"No, no!" screamed Issy vehemently. "Stay where you be. Catch a-holt of that wheel. We'll be spinnin' circles if you don't. I'm a-comin'."

But it was another five minutes before he emerged from the cabin, carrying the compass-box very carefully with both hands. He placed it in the binnacle and closed the glass lid.

"'Twas catched in a bluefish-line," he explained. "All snarled up, 'twas."

Sam peered through the glass at the compass.

"Thunder!" he exclaimed. "I should say we had spun around. Instead of north being off here where I thought it was, it's 'way out to the right. Queer how fog'll mix a fellow up. Trumet's about northeast, isn't it?"

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"No'theast by no'th's the course. Keep her just there."

The Lady May, still at half-speed, kept on through the mist. Time passed. The early autumn twilight, made darker still by the fog, deepened. They lit the lantern in order to see the compass-card. Issy had the wheel now. Sam was forward, keeping a lookout and fretting at the delay.

"It's seven o'clock already," he cried. "For heaven's sake, how late will you be? I've got to be there by quarter of eight. D'you hear? I've *got* to."

"Well, we're gittin' there. Can't expect to travel so fast with part of the power off. You'll be where you're goin' full as soon as you want to be, I cal'late."

And he chuckled.

Another half-hour and, through the wet blackness, a light flashed, vanished, and flashed again. Issy saw it and smiled grimly. Bartlett saw it and shouted.

"What's that light?" he cried. "Did you see it? There it is, off there."

"I see it. There's a light at Trumet Neck, ain't there?"

"Humph! It's been years since I was there, but I thought Trumet light was steady. However——"

Issy shut off the power altogether and the Lady May slid easily up to the wharf. Feverishly her skipper made her fast.

"Yes, sir!" he cried exultantly. "We're here. And no Black Rover nor anybody else ever done a better piece of steerin' than that, nuther."

He clambered over the string-piece, right at the heels of his impatient but grateful passenger. Sam's thanks were profuse and sincere.

"I'll never forget it, Is," he declared. "I'll never forget it. And you'll have to let me pay you the— What makes you shake so?"

Issy pulled his arm away and stepped back.

"I'll never forget it, Is," continued Sam. "I— Why! What——?"

He was standing at the shore end of the wharf, gazing up at the lighted windows. They were those of a dwelling-house—an old-fashioned house with a back yard sloping down to the landing.

And then Issy McKay leaned forward and spoke in his ear.

"You bet you won't forgit it, Sam Bartlett!" he crowed, in trembling but delicious triumph. "You bet you won't! I've fixed you just the same as the Black Rover fixed

THAT NIGHT HE PUT A PAPER NOVEL INTO THE STOVE.

"Ain't that the wharf ahead?"

Sure enough, out of the dark loomed the bulk of a small wharf, with catboats at anchor near it. Higher up, somewhere on the shore, were the lighted windows of a building.

"By thunder, we're here!" exclaimed Sam, and drew a long breath.

the mutineers. Run off with my girl, will ye? And marry her, will ye? I——"

Sam interrupted him. "Why! *Why!*" he cried. "That's—that's Gertie's house! This isn't Trumet! *It's Wellmouth!*"

The next moment he was seized from behind. The skipper's arms were around his

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waist and the skipper's thin legs twisted about his own. They fell together upon the sand and, as they rolled and struggled, Issy's yells rose loud and high.

"Cap'n Ab!" he shrieked. "Cap'n Ab! Come on, Cap'n Ab! I've got him! I've got the feller that's tryin' to steal your daughter! Come on! I've got him! I'm hangin' to him!"

A door banged open. Some one rushed down the walk. And then a girl's voice cried in alarm:

"What is it? Who is it? What *is* the matter?"

And from the bundle of legs and arms on the ground two voices exclaimed: "*Gertie!*"

"But where *is* your father?" asked Sam. Issy asked nothing. He merely sat still and listened.

"Why, he's at Trumet. At least I suppose he is. Mrs. Jones—she's gone to telephone to him now—says that he came home this morning with one of those dreadful 'attacks' of his. And after dinner he seemed so sick that, when she went for the doctor, she wired me at auntie's to come home. I didn't want to come—you know why—but I *couldn't* let him die alone. And so I caught the three o'clock train and came. I knew you'd forgive me. But it seems that when Mrs. Jones came back with the doctor they found father up and dressed and storming like a crazy man. He had received some sort of a letter; he wouldn't say what. And, in spite of all they could do, he insisted on going out. And Mr. Starkey says he went to Trumet on the afternoon freight. We must have passed each other on the way. And I'm so— But why are you *here?* And what were you and Issy doing? And——"

Her lover broke in eagerly. "Then you're alone now?" he asked.

"Yes, but——"

"Good! Your father can't get a train back from Trumet before to-morrow morning. I don't know what this letter was—but never mind. Perhaps friend McKay knows more about it. It may be that the Cap'n is waiting now outside the Baptist church. Gertie, now's our chance. You come with me right up to the minister's. He's a friend of mine. He understands. He'll marry us, *I* know. Come! we mustn't lose a minute. Your dad may take a notion to drive back."

He led her off up the lane, she protesting, he urging. At the corner of the house he turned.

"I say, Is!" he called. "Don't you want to come to the wedding? Seems to me we owe you that, considering all you've done to help it along. Or perhaps you want to stay and fix that compass of yours."

Issy didn't answer. Some time after they had gone he arose from the ground and stumbled home. That night he put a paper novel into the stove. Next day he removed an iron spike from the Lady May's compass-box. The needle swung back to its proper position.

The Traveler

By SARAH N. CLEGHORN

ONCE did he dwell within the Golden Gate,
And once he roamed the prairies free,
And once he was the cook, and once the mate
On ships that sailed the Yellow Sea.

But now grown old, with empty purse and lean,
Rheumatic shoulders, stooping front,
He lives at home among the mountains green,
And plows the valleys of Vermont.

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The Debt of Honor

By MARGARET SUTTON BRISCOE

Author of "Jimty and Others," "A Change of Heart," etc.

Illustrations by Bernard J. Rosenmeyer

"DON'T, don't make me answer you again, Mr. Courtney! I never shall marry—how could I?—while my aunt needs me as she does. I am so sorry, more sorry than I can ever tell you, that this has happened. I ought to have prevented it. My aunt must have some one to turn to. This mere money support I can give is the least important. You know—who understands better?—all she needs."

"I knew exactly what you would reply," he said. "That was the one reason why I waited. But—you understood."

She flushed deeply, bending her head over her needlework, in which woman's refuge she seemed to find sanctuary. "But I—I couldn't say to you earlier how utterly impossible this is, not—not before you spoke to me. Now—oh, it is so out of the question that it ought to be easy to forget all about it, at once."

As if assuming his consent, to prove her own power of quick forgetting she went on practically: "I felt glad when you came in this evening that I was here alone, because I have been wanting to speak of something to you. Would you mind telling me what rent you have been paying for this apartment?"

Courtney sat looking at her, embarrassed, without reply. "I know—" said Miss Ireland, "that is, I know now, since you do not answer, what the apartment costs. The janitor told me. It was a godsend, a rescue, when you rented these rooms to us. I sha'n't ever forget what you did for us then. Never! I don't offer now to make up any of the arrears that really are due to you. But you have kept only one-third of the apartment for your own use. If we stay on here, we must pay you a just proportion, not this nominal rate."

"What have you to do with it?" laughed Courtney. It was not often that he was thus caught unready. "My transaction was with your aunt. She likes, I think, to keep at least the semblance of the reins in her hands. Don't you think you would, in her place? She is a bit older than you."

"Oh, I know how good you are to her, how you understand her," she cried gratefully. "It isn't that I want to rule, to interfere—" She broke off unhappily, and he rose to stand by her, his hands on the back of her chair.

"What is it you do want?" he asked. "To carry all the family cares on these slender, slender shoulders? Look at mine. What yours stagger under would be such a feather-weight to them. Your duties," he entreated, "let them be my duty—your people, my people. You have refused me today for every reason on earth—but one. You have not once said that you cannot learn to love me."

For a moment she closed her eyes; but as she opened them again, looking full into his, he drew back. "No," she answered steadily, "I have not once said I cannot learn to love you. How could I say that? I can say—I do not love you, not in the least in the way you wish; of that I am very sure. I never would have let that grow up between us. I have my responsibilities. I wish to carry them—unshared."

He stood aside from her, listening silently, and she went on as if turning to him again, as she had learned to turn, for comfort, for support, advice.

"You must see how dishonorable it would be for me to listen to you—for a moment. We have been, by accident, thrown together in ways that have appealed to you unduly. You are so kind, impulsive, so generous! Don't you see—you have been led to believe that it is more than kindness you are feeling for me? You shall not burden yourself, hamper your career. Oh, why do you make

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it so hard! You always call yourself '*struggling*'"—her laugh was near to tears. "Compared with us, with our brightest prospects—You speak as if you and we were alike compelled to economize. You—" She laughed again. "Oh, Mr. Courtney, you haven't the slightest idea of what economy is!"

But he did know what economy meant for them, all that her hesitations admitted, and he could not endure the thought. There was no hunger now, thank God, nor cold, no present fear of either; both had been sickeningly near them in the past. What security was there against them in an unprotected future?

"I understand," he agreed gently. "Don't struggle so to explain everything. I can see your position. I honor it. Perhaps it was not fair for me to speak—not yet, placed as we all are; but you needn't be troubled. It's all said and answered, and—over now."

She turned to him with a sigh of relief, deep, unconscious, touching. "Oh, you always understand. If you had persisted—you can see what must have happened! I would never in words have made conditions; but we have been so happy here, so safe. It would have been hard to——"

He nodded understandingly. "I accept your condition," he agreed. She was competent, he knew, for any quick action that called for courage, for resolve. He believed that she would have been capable of sweeping her charge into the streets unsheltered, within the hour, if he had refused to yield at once to her unspoken condition. She held the key to the position.

"I NEVER SHALL MARRY WHILE MY AUNT NEEDS ME AS SHE DOES."

"There shall be nothing here to disturb you," he said gravely. "I pledge myself not to urge—anything—without your permission, given me in words, or implied." He had turned as if to leave her, when his glance fell on the supper-table, placed in the center of the small living-room, where they had been sitting.

The table was set for the evening meal with a solitary plate. "One plate?" he asked. "You were to eat your supper alone to-night?"

"I am to eat my supper alone to-night," she replied. "My aunt has run away to a neighbor's. She loves a little frolic of that kind. But she always leaves me some sort of surprise in the refrigerator—a consolation gift! She thinks I must be lonely. She would be."

"What of me? I eat three meals a day, every day, alone. No one seems to think I need comforting."

"Perhaps you don't look as if you did. You have never seemed to me exactly an object of pity."

"No—" he admitted, "I'm afraid I don't have such a bad time."

But his glance returned to the table, lingered again on the homelike tea-tray, the old thin-worn silver spoons, the ancient-patterned urn. Through what sacrifices had these heirlooms been preserved?

"Couldn't you—?" he ventured. "You don't mean to say you won't ask me to supper! Your aunt always urges me to stay when I drop in near a meal-time. She's the soul of hospitality. You know how vexed she will be if I tell her that I was here, longing

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HER EXPECTANT MANNER WAS AN INVITATION.

for a cup of tea, hungry for wafer-bread and butter—how do you cut it so thin!—and you sent me away thirsty, hungry. There's a delicious surprise, plenty for both of us, in that small refrigerator. Do you want all of it yourself?"

"No-o."

"Of course," he went on seriously, "if you really don't want *me*——"

Looking up at him doubtingly, her manner suddenly changed. She seemed to determine to carry through the practical rôle she had decided upon. "There is no reason in the world why you shouldn't stay to supper—if you really want to," she said. "You are more than welcome to thin bread and butter and tea, or whatever happens to be here." Traditions of hospitality seemed to reprove her. "I shall be glad to have you stay to supper to-night, Mr. Courtney." She spoke with a pretty graciousness, folding her work as she rose. "Will you excuse me while I look for it?"

Courtney had always believed that he understood who was responsible for the delicate refinement of these [illegible] rooms. As a home-lover, he had felt, [illegible] he crossed the threshold, that indescribable [illegible] where which only a woman, and by no means every woman, can create.

After a first clumsy effort toward assistance, he stood aside, following the young housekeeper with his eyes, noting, half with amusement at his own disappointment, that she set his place, not opposite her own, but, after a moment's hesitation, at the angle side of the board.

If without straw she could weave so sweet a nest, if while playing the man's part in the world outside, she could still become so adorably wise in woman's lore, what might she not accomplish where she was the heart, the very secret of a home. . . .

The bread lay sliced in wafer sheets, the chafing-dish bubbled, the tea-urn hung steaming in its rack, when Miss Ireland glanced toward her guest, and stood by the table, waiting. Her expectant manner was an invitation, but he did not move; and she was forced to speak.

"Supper is ready," she said, adding, "I thought that you were hungry!"

Why the smiling summons, the homely little scene, so moved him, Courtney tried to tell himself he did not know. He drew out the chair for his hostess, and gravely took his own place at the table. It was she who spoke first, tilting the tea-urn in its rack and holding it poised over the empty cup.

"How many lumps of sugar?" she asked.

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"One, if you please."

"And cream?"

"No cream, thank you."

He glanced up soberly at her.

All that delightful, unreasoning laughter of youth that, despite her air of responsibility would so often and unexpectedly light Miss Ireland's face, broke suddenly in the gray eyes. "But of course you may laugh, if you want to," she said, and laughed aloud herself, pretty, contagious laughter. . . .

Courtney leaned back in his chair, emptied plate before him, teacup in hand.

"But which," he asked, glancing about the table, "is the refrigerator surprise? Have we eaten it?"

"No, it hasn't appeared on the table yet. It's a dessert to-night. My aunt left it in the refrigerator covered with a plate. I had to promise her not to open it before I finished my first course. Shall we look at it now?"

Courtney glanced down into his cup. "Might I have a drop more of tea?" he begged. "This cup of tea is the only one I ever felt enthusiasm for."

"It's the fresh boiling water," stated the young housekeeper. "The second cup will not be so good, unless"—she hesitated—"unless you will wait for fresh water to boil."

He drew out his watch, looked at it, shamelessly appeared to hesitate.

"How long does it take water to boil?"

"Ten minutes or so."

"Then—but isn't it too much trouble?"

She was already pouring fresh water into the tea-urn and relighting the lamp under the rack. Then, with folded hands, she sat watching the spout of the urn.

"I know this much about housekeeping," Courtney reproved her, "that you must not watch the pot. Suppose I tell you a story while we wait. I heard a good one the other day. It's a love-tale. The man of the story—he's an old friend of mine—is about my age; the woman, she's almost old enough—not quite, perhaps—to be his mother. Can you see any romance in that?"

Miss Ireland, her half-empty teacup poised in her hand, laughed, with a little wry face.

"Don't let me spoil the story, but— How could he! How could she!"

"*She* couldn't. That's the point of the story. She wouldn't do a thing but laugh. To her, it was absurd, out of the question; but he made her consider it seriously enough to refuse him definitely, refuse him repeatedly.

"She had never married, I don't know why; but there was nothing of the old maid about her. He's old for his age, a big-bodied, big-brained, square-jawed fellow, hard for any one to deny—man or woman."

"She was attractive?"

"Oh, beautiful!—very, witty, high-spirited, and good as gold. He took me to see her, and I hadn't been with her five minutes before I knew why he cared nothing about the difference in their ages. Age could not wither her! Once in love with her, no man would have cared if she were a hundred; he couldn't! There was nothing for him to do—but run. I begged him that night as we walked home together to go abroad, anywhere; and it wouldn't be easy even then. And it was such a fool's errand for him—win her or lose her, he lost. It was a wretched match for either of them."

"You didn't *say* all that to him?"

"Yes. Not that it made any difference. He agreed that I was right. 'Anybody in his senses must call it folly,' he said. 'There's every reason in the world against it, except one—the only excuse that makes it possible—right. We love each other; it's too late for either of us to draw back.'"

Miss Ireland looked up surprised.

"But I thought you said she——"

"I did say she had told him, over and over, that she cared nothing, sentimentally, for him. His point, as he then explained it to me, was that he—didn't believe her. He had made up his stubborn mind, from what evidence I couldn't gather—I don't think he quite knew himself—that, without being at all conscious of it, she cared for him deeply. Of course such things have happened. We have all known cases where—" Miss Ireland was bending to hold her finger over the spout of the tea-urn as if testing a steam that was yet to rise. She had glanced up quickly at Courtney's face as he spoke, then turned again to the unresponsive urn.

"No," she said. "I have never known such a case. I can't see why he persisted in not believing her."

"Neither could I see. It seemed to me his *duty* to believe her. I told him so. I assured him I could not detect anything—word, look, tone—in her manner to him that ought to encourage his hoping for anything other than the respect and friendship that she was evidently willing to give him. He was perfectly obstinate. He said he knew she had learned, slowly, to care for him; and,

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SHE GAZED UP AT HIM VAGUELY, STILL BEWILDERED, BREATHLESS.

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that being his conviction—what was his duty?"

Miss Ireland sat looking down thoughtfully a moment before she replied.

"If"—she said presently—"if he had taught her—any woman—to love him, why then—yes, I suppose he owed it to her to——"

"No, no, that was not at all the line of his argument. His debt of honor, as he saw it, was not so much to her, as to the love that he maintained existed between them. An emotion so deep—this was the position he took—so sacred as a great love, a love that not every one can have, is owed the birthright of recognized existence. Nothing vital separated them, there was no moral obstacle; a love like theirs, he insisted, became a thing alive, real as flesh and blood. To kill it would be—murder. He said it was like a child brought into the world, a responsibility, not to be ignored, neglected, nor abused. He went so far as to claim that duty to this wonderful emotion rose higher than an obligation to possible happiness. Suppose they married, and found good reason for the world's rooted objection to unequal marriages. Still—so he argued—they would have to feel their course justified. Loyalty to such a love demanded taking all risks. He believed there was no risk for them. He meant to marry her—if he could induce her to consent. He had told her all this, his theory of life, love, honor; and he had also told her that he knew she loved him."

"And what had she replied?"

"Laughed in his face, he said. 'Care for you!' she cried. 'How could I?' But she agreed with him, seriously enough, that a great love was a debt of honor. Her stronghold, you see, was that she knew she cared nothing about him—as a lover. From that position he could not shake her. Isn't that the strangest love-tale?"

Miss Ireland was silent a moment; when she spoke it was hesitatingly. "They were both right, I suppose. A great love must be—its own excuse; but she was in a position to know——"

"Ah, wait—not every woman in the position of the lady of my story would have the courage to admit any such premises. When a woman agrees that she will yield if she discovers that she greatly loves, that—that leaves to her lover—doesn't it?—only the burden of proving to her that she does love?"

Little gusts of steam were now fitfully blowing from the tea-urn. Miss Ireland sat watching them rise. "No woman, in her case," she said slowly, "would dare to admit—anything, unless she were very—very sure of herself. Her frankness would have to prove her indifference, it seems to me. It ought to have proved it—to them both."

"Ah, wait again. You haven't heard the end of my story. He burst into my office the other day the happiest man in the world. They are married."

"Married!"

"Yes, it came off quite suddenly—abroad. They have been married some weeks. It seems she concluded the affair had run on long enough; and when she left this side, as she had been for some time planning to do, she went suddenly, with no word to him but a line of farewell, telling him it was best that he should not see her before she left.

"He took the next steamer over and traced her to the town where she was staying. There were some ruins near by, and she was walking there alone when he arrived. When he found her she was sitting on the verge of one of the old towers. She heard his step and turned quickly. He told me all this as frankly as he had the first of the story. When she recognized him, she rose quickly and stood looking at him, plainly very much troubled, he said. There wasn't the least sign of encouragement about her. She looked merely annoyed. 'You shouldn't—' she said. 'No, no, you shouldn't have done this!' and as she spoke she was retreating. Before he could call out to her, she had gone farther than she knew and was on the edge of the parapet. The old stone crumbled under her heel, and she would have dropped over the wall if he had not sprung forward and caught her in his arms. While he still held her, while she looked up at him, their eyes meeting, her face near his—he was only human, I suppose—he kissed her. He said it was no surprise in the world to him when she spoke. As soon as his lips touched hers, when he saw the color flood over her face, he knew the one reply she could make—she was his; he had only claimed his own. She said: 'Yes, I love you. Yes—I care. I think—I have always cared.' And the whole struggle was over.

"They climbed down from the tower and went to the nearest town and were married. I don't think they will ever regret it. It was strange—wasn't it?"

Miss Ireland was moving the teacups nearer to the urn, and her gaze was fixed upon the china; there was something restless in her motions. "So strange," she said, "that I

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can't understand it. Why should she change for no new reason? No," she repeated, "she seems to me weak. I don't *like* her part of the story."

"Her husband still explains her—and I imagine he knows," Courtney replied—"as thoroughly self-deceived. He knew, all the while, what fire there was beneath that snow. Perhaps—perhaps it was the simple, old, old story of the Sleeping Beauty. His kiss waked her, it may be, not to love exactly, but to *knowing* that she loved. To be roused suddenly to a great, an unimagined, love—can't you understand that it would sweep one away? The awakening, the surrender, seem to me very natural, the most simple part of the whole story." He was speaking more and more slowly, as if uncertain what he might find himself saying; he was not looking at her. "You must always remember that the lady of the story had already admitted to her lover—and such an admission is an agreement—that if a woman awoke to know she loved deeply, he should honor her debt, pay it in full. That was all she did." As if his pause questioned her, Miss Ireland glanced up at him. He spoke slowly. "You think," he said, "you think one *couldn't* be loving like that unconsciously. I know—it is quite possible."

The tea-urn steamed high in its rack, and Courtney sprang up to lift it from the flame. The water was bubbling and tumbling, almost boiling out of the spout.

"It pays, sometimes, not to watch things too closely," he said. "May I pour the tea—for both of us?" He served the tea, laughing at his own mistakes, enjoying his own awkwardness, dropping the tea-ball, spilling the water, beyond redress confusing the tea-tray. He had used in his operations any available cup, bowl, and saucer in reach before Miss Ireland moved, taking his self-appointed task from him.

Then it was the "refrigerator surprise" that engrossed his attention. Must he wait for it longer? Did honor demand that they still leave it to chill in the ice-chest? The refrigerator was in the little hall—he remembered it was there. Might he fetch in the surprise now? Without waiting for reply, hurrying from the room, he left her alone. . . .

The dessert the refrigerator yielded, the concealed surprise, proved to be a small pitcher of griddle-cake batter, mixed and ready for frying.

Miss Ireland sat looking in dismay at the prize disclosed.

"Oh, dear, dear aunt," she laughed. "Isn't this just like her? To think of her taking the trouble—just for me! And she believed I should want to fry them for myself alone. I should have had to cook them, too, or hurt her feelings. Do you care for hot griddle-cakes and sirup, Mr. Courtney?"

"I? Why, the very last time I took supper here, your aunt gave me griddle-cakes and sirup. I ate—I lost count, purposely."

Miss Ireland laughed reminiscently. "I do remember now. You won't lose count to-night. I am not the cook my aunt is."

Courtney's spirits seemed undashed. "I can always eat my way to glory," he maintained. "I am to have the same kind of sirup on my cakes? May I milk the little brown cow myself?"

"The *brown cow*—oh, you mean the old china sirup-jug? It is quaint, isn't it? My aunt is as fond of it as of her old silver."

"So am I. I want to lift it by its twisted tail again, and see the sirup dribble from its mouth. That's more fun than eating the cakes—what? Don't tell me you forget where it's kept stabled. I'm sure I saw your aunt take it out of that corner closet yonder."

He rose, but quicker than he, declaring that she now remembered precisely where the little brown cow was kept tethered, she had caught up a tall stool and, carrying it to the closet, sprung lightly upon it; before he could prevent her, she was reaching high toward the bovine sirup-jug, on the tallest shelf of the cabinet.

As she stretched up both hands Courtney turned suddenly and sprang toward her. Whether her foot had slipped, or the stool tilted as she lifted her arms, he did not see; he was too late to avert the blow of the swinging door, which she grasped in falling; but he was in time to catch her in his arms before she reached the floor.

He steadied, and stood motionless, supporting her, looking down into the face he held pressed close against his breast; and as she gazed up at him vaguely, still bewildered, with lips parted, breathless—suddenly the color came, flooded over her face, her brow, her throat.

She was his! Had he but to stoop to claim his own?

"Dear," he cried, "I am only human! Don't you—don't you *now* understand? You love me—you care. I think—I think you have always cared!"

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The Story of Trivett

By SEWELL FORD

Illustrations by Henry Raleigh

WHEN the town of Crosscut, State of Michigan, produced Ordway Trivett there was no public demonstration of joy. They even neglected to blow the steam-siren on the sawmill. But, then, Crosscut was unused to welcoming celebrities. As a matter of fact, no one dreamed that the new Trivett baby would ever grow up to do more than handle a pike on a river drive or manipulate a set of gang-saws. Steve Trivett had done these things; why not his son? Crosscut, you see, estimated human activities by the number of million feet of lumber annually turned out, and all its mental processes were similarly influenced.

But at two-and-twenty Ordway Trivett was neither a woodsman nor a mill hand, owing to circumstances that no one in Crosscut could have been expected to foresee. By that time Crosscut had ceased to be a lumber town, Steve Trivett and his wife had joined the silent majority, and Ordway had drifted down the State to live with an uncle who ran a grocery store and a sewing-machine agency. Also during that period Ordway had completed a course in civil engineering at a rather mediocre academy, which masqueraded under the name of Thunder Bay College.

Just at this point you are invited to a closer scrutiny of Ordway, with an ornamental diploma tucked under one arm, for here his career begins to unfold in the more or less illogical manner of careers that are really great.

"Trivett," said the president of Thunder Bay College, "I am confident that we shall hear great things of you."

Now, the genial old gentleman had said precisely the same to at least a score of young men within the hour, but Trivett was one of the few who hugged the prophecy to his soul. It was the first expression of the kind that had ever gratified his ears, and it so exactly coincided with his own private opinion that he knew it must be true.

Aside from the fact that he had attained the self-complacent age, you would hardly have suspected Ordway Trivett of abounding egotism. We generally concede modesty to the plain-featured, and surely Trivett lacked many of the graces. He was a weedy, long-shanked youth, cinnamon-colored as to hair, with a thin nose ending buttonwise, and a turnip-shaped head that bobbed uncertainly on an attenuated neck.

But in spite of all this, Trivett was not modest, not so that you would notice it. The background was not for him. Whenever it occurred to Trivett to make known his views he pushed to the front and spoke up. Most of his classmates had thought him a bore. A few of them had confidentially told him that he *was* a bore, which disturbed him not at all.

"Just wait," said Trivett to himself. "I'll show 'em."

This signified that Trivett meant to do things. To make sure of a field big enough for his swelling genius he determined to go direct to New York. They were constantly doing great things there, and without doubt they needed help. So he went. He took with him the considerable capital of five ten-dollar bills and a letter of introduction. The letter had been written by a druggist whose wife's cousin had married a brother of a man who was a big contractor in the metropolis of the East. Thus Trivett's welcome to the city and his immediate employment therein were to be, in a sense, a family affair.

This program seemed excellent in central

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"TRIVETT, I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE SHALL HEAR GREAT THINGS OF YOU."

Michigan, but when it came to carrying it out in New York there was a hitch. The great contractor skimmed through the druggist's letter and snorted. Then he declared that he took little stock in the brother mentioned, who had never amounted to much anyway; that he had no interest at all in the various relatives of his brother's wife; that he was not employing amateur civil engineers just then; and, besides, this was his busy day. Ordway was quite ready to argue these several points. The personage was not.

"All right, sir," said Trivett menacingly, and stalked out. He would bestow his invaluable services elsewhere.

Then ensued a season when Trivett went from office to office, exhibiting his diploma, hinting at the prophecy made by the president of Thunder Bay College, and seeking employment. He discovered that undeveloped engineering genius was a drug on the market. No one wanted to send him out with a transit. They would not even give him a chance to carry a target and chain-tape. It seemed incredible, but it was so. Moreover, only the fragments of his last ten-dollar bill remained. There was no source from which he might draw other tens. The close-fisted old uncle who had advanced the first lot had made this extremely plain before Trivett had started for New York.

Reluctantly Trivett decided that for a time he must set about earning his living in some humble manner. It was not precisely the proper spirit in which to look for a job. Perhaps that accounts for the fact that he failed to find one. Almost before he knew it his few remaining dollars slipped away, and then, one memorable morning, Ordway Trivett, C.E., found himself confronted by a condition that amazed and pained him. He was without money, without friends, without shelter, and a wickedly long way from central Michigan.

The situation is trite enough in the telling, but to Trivett it was astonishingly unique. Having studied it carefully, he came to the conclusion that in no place where he had ever been before could a man starve to death with more facility than right in the heart of New York. As a principle of sociology Trivett had heard this stated before with fine unconcern. The personal application of it was different. He felt the results first in the pit of his stomach, wherever that is, and the shameful truth came home to him that he was a coward. Trivett gulped his dose of fear desperately, and it left him with a dry tongue, wabbly knees, and a backbone that felt like a stalk of wilted rhubarb. His mind became panicky. "I am going to starve, starve, starve!" This was his one reflection, that he repeated again and again. He slumped wretchedly on a park bench and trembled as one with the ague.

But Trivett did not starve. The thing was really more difficult than it seemed. He did not even get to be very hungry. There were soup-tickets and free lodgings and the breadline. Trivett found them. Also he discovered the place where a man is fitted out with sandwich-boards and set to parading the streets at a pittance an hour.

It is true, however, that New York did use Trivett roughly. He took it very hard, too. All the bitterness of failure, of stern rebuff, of personal disgrace, he tasted. The shame of the unfit was his. Ignoble fear smothered his heart. And then, because Trivett was in his twenties instead of the forties, little by little he emerged from the gray cloud. He found work. He saved, penny on penny, dime on dime, dollar on dollar, until at length, after a nightmare existence that seemed years, but was probably months, he had snatched from the wolflike city money enough to take him a thousand miles west.

II

THAT was not sufficient for Trivett, though, merely to escape. Standing on the after-deck

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of a Jersey-bound ferry-boat, he shook a futile fist at the tiered rows of twinkling lights that represented New York, and vowed that somehow, at some time, he would get square with the biggest city in the New World. It seemed like a piece of hysterical bombast, of course. Even Trivett was half ashamed, which proves that a man never knows how much he can do until he tries.

Yet it was not all bombast. For, whatever else may be said of Trivett, he was always tremendously in earnest. It would be unjust to estimate him as a one-idea man. His mind allowed of two, possibly of three, major motives, which worked harmoniously to guide his energies and direct his acts. But on these two or three he concentrated all there was of him to concentrate, and along the path thus dictated he hurled himself with the entire force that he possessed.

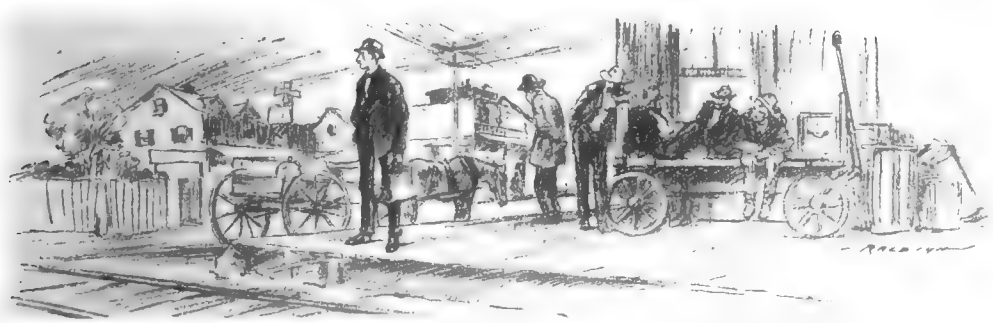
Of course, there were results. There were bound to be. Trivett retired from New York bruised and chastened of spirit, but with unshaken faith in the greatness that lay within him. They had refused to give him a fair show, that was all. New York should pay for that later. In the meantime he must find a place where he could get a foothold. If he could not begin under a great man he would work for a little one. He was willing to start at the bottom now.

And he did. He drove corner stakes, dug holes for boundary monuments, carried a target. But he kept his eyes open, studied his trigonometry, and ran lines on his own account during off hours. In due time he was able to start out for himself. Then it was he who made the calculations, figured the cubic yards, squinted through the transit-glass, and waved imperious signals at the target-man. He surveyed farms and building-lots, staked out sewers, ran county lines. He secured a small railroad contract. He set up offices in a newly fledged city. He was awarded a slice of State work.

There was nothing meteoric about the rise of Trivett. He made no brilliant strokes. It was not in him, for that matter. But he stuck to his work. He thought about nothing else. He indulged in no side issues, such as poker or politics. When he read, he read about engineering; when he talked, he talked engineering; and when eventually, because he was so full of the thing that he felt he must, he took to the pen, he wrote of engineering problems, and wrote well. He described how *he* would go about such and such pieces of work, how he would avoid this difficulty, overcome that obstacle. At last, largely through the sheer force of his insistence, they believed. They began to quote the opinions of Ordway Trivett, to ask his advice; and at length, when it was proposed to tunnel a mountain or drain the Great Lakes into the Mississippi, or to do anything like that, they consulted Trivett.

He took it all as a matter of course, but kept hammering away. He did not let up. The prophecy of the Thunder Bay College president had been fulfilled, but there was one score that remained unsettled.

And then, after having been so long immune from feminine wiles, he met Elora Hawes. Just why he should surrender to the charms of Miss Hawes rather than to those of any one of the hundred or more others whom he must have met, no one will ever know, not even Trivett. But surrender he did. For one who was unpractised in such affairs he displayed fairly good taste, although Elora was of a somewhat showy type. She was full-figured. Her big eyes had about them a sort of bovine placidity, and if her face was rather vapid, her complexion could



SO HE WENT—WITH THE CONSIDERABLE CAPITAL OF FIVE TEN-DOLLAR BILLS AND A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

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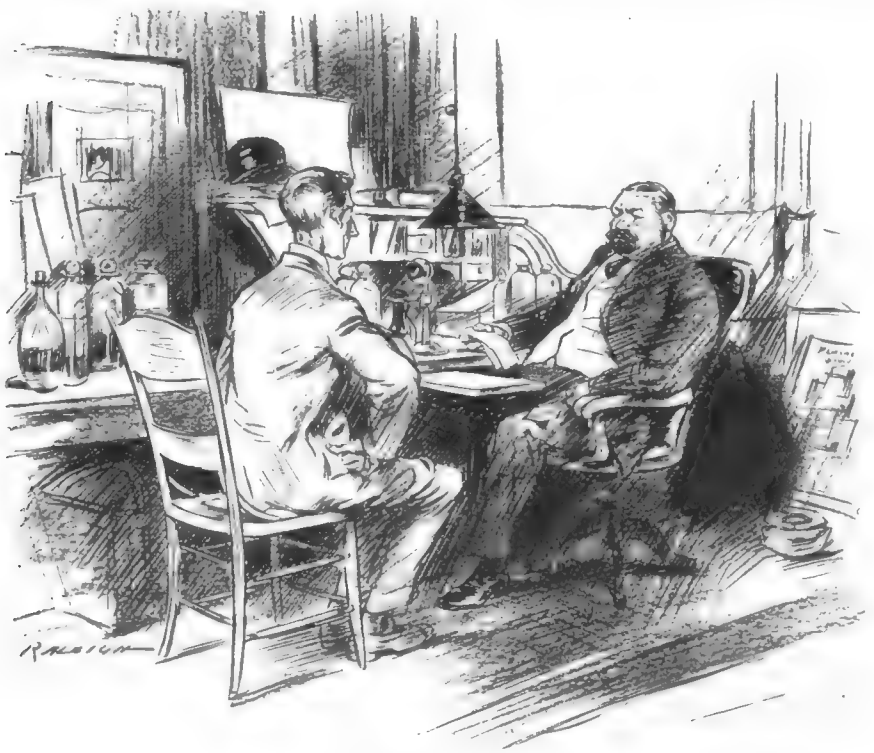
hardly be matched. Her cheeks had the white and red of a cut strawberry. Her manner indicated huge content with herself.

Elora was somewhat amused when she first noticed the obvious impression that she had made upon Trivett, for he had not grown a bit handsomer, although he had added a carroty mustache to the cinnamon-red hair and had learned to wear a four-inch collar. Elora was amused for the reason that her masculine ideal was a swashbuckling matinée hero in knee-breeches and a powdered wig.



THE GREAT CONTRACTOR SKIMMED THROUGH THE DRUGGIST'S LETTER AND SNORTED.

She had a half-baked notion that some day such a one would appear, sword in hand, and fight his way to her through a horde of enemies. One must read a great many romantic novels to arrive at this state of mind. Elora had read them. So you may picture her cold indifference to the attentions of Ordway Trivett.

Some half-dozen other men, young and old, but lacking both powdered wigs and knee-breeches, had given Elora up as unattainable. Not so Ordway. He wooed her with the same concentration that he devoted to his profession. He was an awkward suitor, perhaps, but his methods were thorough. Elora Hawes came to know the full meaning of the word persistency. When Trivett took to coming every evening her amusement changed to dismay. At the end of a month of this sort of thing she packed her trunk and arranged to leave home. She had an uncle in New York, a crotchety old fellow of whom she had never been particularly fond, but now she determined to visit him, and off she went.

Trivett was taken aback by this move. Had she selected almost any other place on the globe he would have invented some excuse for following. But he drew the line at New York. No, he could not go there, not just yet. Of course, he no longer expected literally to fulfil his vow of wreaking vengeance on that city. Anything so concrete as this was out of the question. But he did wait for the day when New York, who had spurned him once, should require his services. Then he meant to fling that old injustice back at her, and perhaps refuse outright.

Only the robust egotism of a Trivett was

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HE SLUMPED WRETCHEDLY ON A PARK BENCH AND TREMBLED AS ONE WITH AGUE.

equal to this, for the world is big and good engineers are many. Trivett, however, was more than a good engineer. He was rapidly becoming noted. Some day the call might come.

And sure enough, even before Trivett really looked for it, it did come. Elora had been gone barely a fortnight when the summons arrived. It took the form of a letter from a contractor whose immense undertakings had thrilled the country.

"We are about to give New York an underground railway," ran the letter. "To do it we must tunnel the whole length of the city. It's a big job. We need the best brains we can get, so come on and help us. I want you. New York wants you. Name your price."

"Ha!" said Ordway Trivett, for all the world like the villain in a melodrama. Oh, yes, he would go. He would see what was to be done, convince himself that he could do it, and then tell them to go hang. He could afford to say that. Afterward he would look up Elora Hawes.

But when Trivett examined the plans, glanced at the long roll of blue-print map, and from there out through the contractor's office window at the traffic-choked streets, at the great buildings thickly studded on either side, he drew in his breath between clenched teeth. The heavy white lines on the blue-print cut a clean swath through the center of all this.

"Much rock excavation to be done?" he asked.

"Miles of it," said the contractor.

"And what is it like?—rotten shale, or——"

THERE WERE SOUP-TICKETS AND FREE LODGINGS AND THE BREAD-LINE.

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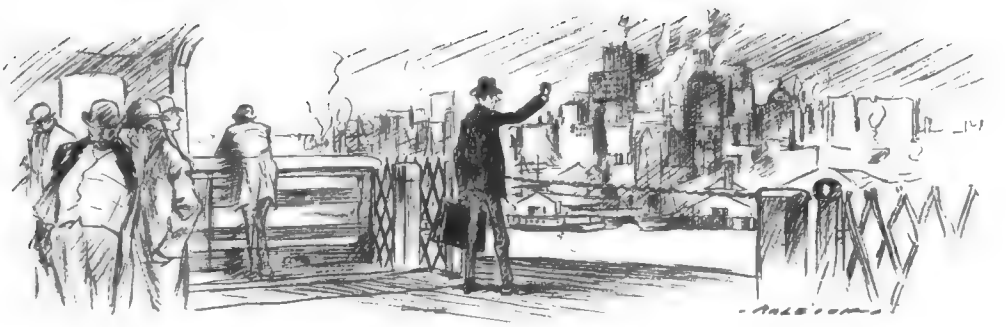

HE SHOOK A FUTILE FIST AND VOWED HE WOULD GET SQUARE WITH THE BIGGEST CITY IN THE NEW WORLD.

"Shale! It's trap and mica schist, the hard crust of the Atlantic seaboard."

"But that will require dynamite."

"Sure! Tons of it."

Once more Trivett sucked satisfaction through his shut teeth.

"I'll help," said he.

Later, being left alone at a seventeenth-story window that commanded a view up and down the most populous island of the world, he whispered to himself: "Gad! And they ask me to help rip a hole through the heart of that! *Me!*"

III

For six months Trivett had been at it and an army of men with him. Every one had worked, worked hard, but none harder than he. No one, not even the great contractor who had staked fortune and reputation on the doing of the task, watched its progress more keenly. Up and down the whole length of the operations, Trivett seemed to be everywhere. As the paving-stones and asphalt were torn up and the shoring-planks driven down, he watched the congested highway, cut in half by the surface-opening of the bore, clog and clot like freezing blood in the veins, and chuckled as he watched. He saw busy avenues littered with dirt, blocked by barricades over which unhappy citizens climbed grumblingly. He sniffed the air, reeking with the released gases from the fetid urban soil, and smiled grimly. The complaints, the groans, the curses of the city he heard voiced by a thousand tongues. Still he watched and waited, knowing that worse was yet to come, and exulting.

For to that old grudge Trivett had added a new one. The city that had once shaken starvation at him had played him another trick. It had swallowed Elora. His letters asking for her address had been unanswered. Yet he learned that she was somewhere in this maze of rabbit-warrens through which that immense hole was being burrowed. And for this he hated New York with a renewed hate, and watched for the inevitable to happen.

Yet it was only chance, of course, that placed Trivett on the scene when the first blow fell. The accident was quite unavoidable, to be sure. Neither Ordway Trivett nor any of the threescore men under his immediate supervision had intended to hurl half a ton of rock over an eight-foot board fence, across a very neatly kept back yard, and through the rear wall of a three-story-and-basement private house. But the thing had been done, nevertheless. Trivett and the sub-contractor's foreman, having emerged from their extemporized bomb-proof, stood gazing up out of the excavation at the havoc their last blast had caused. The foreman rolled an unlighted cigar nervously between his lips. His heavy face wore a look of sudden anxiety.

"I'll get hell for this," he muttered. "It'll cost the boss a thousand or so to square things, eh?"

Trivett glanced at his watch, made an entry of the time in a little note-book, and then took another brief but critical look at the wrecked house-wall.

"Oh, a thousand ought to cover all the damages they can prove—unless we've smashed some one in there."

"Smashed some one!" echoed the foreman incredulously. "Smashed some one? Say!" and he gripped Trivett by the arm, "you don't suppose any of that rock could have hit any one, do you?"

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"How should I know?" responded Trivett. "It shouldn't. That's the dining-room it went into; and people aren't expected to be eating at this time of the afternoon, are they? But if any one *was* there— Well, Riley, all you've got to do is to trot over and find out. Better go right away, too."

But Riley would not. He sat on a rock and groaned and cursed his luck.

"Then I'll go," said Trivett.

There was no hesitation about the manner of his going. Picking his way up the steep side of the excavation until he reached the back fence, he made a nicely gaged spring, caught the top board with his fingers, swung a khaki-clad leg upward, and a moment later dropped squarely into a pansy-bed on the other side. A dozen strides took him across the diminutive grass-plot. He found the basement door locked, but beside it was a little shed, to the roof of which he mounted agilely. From there he had only to put his hands on the lower edge of the breach and step up. For a moment he stood framed in the opening, surveying the scene within.

The view was not without interest. Probably it had been rather a nice kind of a dining-room five minutes before; neatly furnished, well appointed, and all that. Now it looked like an imperfectly uncovered section of a Pompeian household. Broken bricks and crumbled mortar were liberally scattered about the room, for the unmannerly missile, not content with smashing in one of the big windows, sash and all, had crashed through a three-foot section of the wall.

As for the rock itself, it rested peacefully on the once polished top of a round mahogany table, the legs of which had collapsed. One jagged corner of the stone was decorated with

AFTER HAVING BEEN SO LONG IMMUNE FROM FEMININE WILES HE MET ELORA HAWES.

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fragments of cut glass and china, originally contained in the sideboard that had obstructed its path. There were other incongruous details, such as a bent gas-fixture with dangling but uncracked globes, and a green-leaved, lavender-budded branch draped carelessly over one of the arms. For an instant Trivett was unable to account for the branch until he remembered the Rose of Sharon bush in the back yard. The rock must have culled that branch on its flight into the dining-room.

It was then that Trivett discerned through the slowly settling cloud of mortar dust two dim figures standing in an arched doorway beyond.

"Well, any one hurt?" he called out.

One of the figures pushed the other behind the draperies and advanced toward the rock-laden ruin of the mahogany table. Trivett saw a portly, middle-aged man whose face was as colorless as the white waistcoat he wore. Yet, for all his evident fear, there was a certain arrogant coldness in his bearing, the hall-mark of the prosperous urbanite.

"Is—is it all over?" There was a decided tremor in his voice.

"Yes, it's all over," said Trivett easily. "One of our blasts got away from us, that's all. No one hurt, is there?"

"Hurt? No, thank God, there was no one in the room."

"Oh, it's all right, then. I didn't know but we'd smashed some one." Here Trivett produced his note-book. "I'll just take a look around and get a line on the damages. Table's about done for, isn't it? What shall I put that down for—seventy-five, eh?"

Mechanically he of the white waistcoat glanced at the crushed table, at the shattered sideboard, around the brick-strewn room.

"What a horrible thing!" he exclaimed, lifting wide-spread and still shaky fingers. "How did it happen?"

Trivett saw that he was likely to make little progress until he had satisfied the man's curiosity.

"Probably the charge was a little heavier than it should have been, or maybe they bungled with the log-damper. It's hard to say. Those Italians are a careless lot. Anyway, this little pebble got loose. But I'll have a gang up here right away to clear this mess out, and one of our claim agents will be up to-night."

"Are—are you the person responsible for—for this?" The householder was getting some of his color back now.

"Me?" said Trivett, looking up from his note-book. "No, I'm not responsible. The contractor's the man you'll have to deal with, and I'd advise you to take what he offers. If you sue, he'll beat you in court. Will seventy-five do for that table?"

But the citizen was thinking of other things. He was looking at that half-ton rock.

"It would have killed both of us, both of us!" he muttered. Then, to Trivett: "See here, sir; are you sure there's no more danger? Is it safe for us to stay here?"

"Safe? Oh, about as safe as you would be anywhere in New York, which isn't saying much. Almost anything is liable to happen in this town, isn't it? But it's only once in a while that a blast gets away from us. I'll tell 'em to watch the dampers a little closer, and we'll try to keep our rocks out of your dining-room hereafter."

"You'll *try!* Great heavens, man, you don't mean to say that you will go on blasting, do you, after—after this?"

Trivett laughed. "Go on! Why, bless you, we've hardly begun. We've just struck bed-rock, you know, and we go twenty feet into that on this section. There are two drills at work down there now. By this time next week we'll have a dozen, and when we get our gasoline-flares we will run night and day shifts. Yes, certainly we mean to go on."

IV

THE citizen was trying hard to be calm. He did not wish to lose his temper. You could see that. Yet he was shocked, exasperated. He saw that he must convince this uncouth, dusty, cinnamon-haired agent of destruction of certain things.

"See here," he began. "My name is Bunworth, Henry Bunworth. This is my house, my home. It has been my home for fifteen years. I don't care to be driven out of it now. But I can't continue to live here unless I have some assurance that this outrage will not be repeated. Now, what assurance can you give?"

Trivett shrugged his shoulders. "Accidents are bound to happen."

"Are they?" said Mr. Bunworth. "Then this drilling and blasting at my back door must stop. Why, I cannot be kept in a continual state of terror. Perhaps it hasn't occurred to you what might have happened

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if my niece and I had been sitting at this table when this little pebble, as you call it, came crashing in?"

understand this business thoroughly before he cut loose.

"You have reduced it, then," he demanded

HE HAD HEARD NOTHING SWEETER THAN THE WORDS OF THIS RED-FACED, WHITE-WAISTCOATED INDIVIDUAL WHO, TO HIM, IMPERSONATED NEW YORK.

"Oh, yes, it did occur to me. That's why I came up."

"Ah!" Mr. Bunworth indulged in a little exclamation of satisfaction. He was scoring a point now. He went on to clinch it: "And suppose, sir, that you had found us here—crushed?"

Again Trivett shrugged his shoulders, but there was no change of expression.

"That would have meant sending for the ambulances, and having a coroner's jury messing around, and no end of a howl in the newspapers for a day or so. There would have been eight or ten thousand dollars damages to pay, too; but the subcontractor figured on all that, of course, when he made his bid."

Henry Bunworth, citizen and householder, shuddered a little, quite involuntarily. But he held himself in well. He meant to

sternly, "to a basis of dollars and cents? And you figure that you can afford to kill about so many human beings without losing money? Is that it?"

"Well, you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs." Trivett had acquired that phrase recently. It seemed to fit the occasion. "And you can't go to the forty-foot level through bed-rock without using plenty of dynamite. We take our chances."

"And I take mine, eh? I take my chance of—this?" and Mr. Bunworth waved his hand at his wrecked dining-room.

Trivett smiled at his earnestness. The fellow was a trifle absurd.

"Do you expect us to scoop out trap-rock with a steam-shovel?" he replied.

"That's enough, sir; quite enough!" exclaimed Mr. Bunworth.

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The moment had come for unbottling his wrath, and he had stored up a lot of it during the last few moments. It came out explosively. He wanted it understood that he was a taxpayer and a property-owner. He had his rights, his sacred rights. He would appeal to the courts for protection. He would get out an injunction. He would secure warrants of arrest for the whole crew of cold-blooded villains. He would put them in jail for attempted manslaughter, every last one of them, from the boss contractor to the Italian laborers, including the impudent ruffian who stood before him.

It was a spirited speech, full of fire. In the course of its delivery Mr. Bunworth paced back and forth over the débris on the floor, became purple as far back as his ears, and shook his fist at Trivett.

"I'll show you!" he exclaimed in conclusion. "I'll teach such as you that this is a civilized community. Why, you're no better than a barbarian; an inhuman, reckless savage! That's what you are, you!"

Ordway Trivett, who had thrown one leg carelessly over a corner of the prostrate sideboard, had been listening with keen appreciation. It was soothing, grateful. In months he had heard nothing sweeter than the words of this red-faced, white-waistcoated individual who, to him, impersonated New York.

"Say!" he responded gleefully, "that's fine! I thought you'd feel something like that, only I wasn't quite sure. I've heard a few scattered hints from others, but nothing that seemed to cover the subject. You don't think you're the only one, do you? Why, bless your heart, man, there are thousands, hundreds of thousands, just like you. No, they don't all get it as rough as you've got it this afternoon, but precious few of 'em escape scot-free. Some of 'em may get it worse. There's plenty of time, years of it coming before we're through."

Here Trivett stood up. He pointed a lean forefinger at Bunworth.

"That's cold-blooded, is it?" he continued. "It's barbarous, eh? Does me good to hear you New Yorkers talk that way. You're such a nice, gentle, soft-hearted, charitable lot yourselves. Why, blast your eyes, don't you suppose I know you, you and your damned city? Didn't you do your best to starve me once? Yes, starve, right here in your streets! And you came within an ace of doing it, too. It wasn't your fault that you didn't. For all any of you cared I might have crept into a corner and died, like a sick dog.

"Oh, you needn't look around like that. I'm not crazy. I'm not going to touch you. I don't have to. I am getting square with the lot of you, in a lump. You've commissioned me to come here and rip a hole from one end of your town to the other. That's what I'm doing now. I have made you fuss, and fume, and sweat, and curse. I have poisoned the air you breathe, blocked your streets, boarded off your sidewalks, undermined your buildings, and now I'm going to scare you half to death. All your courts and judges can't stop me. And it all amounts to this, Mr. What's-your-name: Once I was up against New York; but now, by the Eternal, New York's up against me!"

By way of emphasis Ordway Trivett tapped himself on the chest. Then he fixed his steel-blue eyes on Henry Bunworth and noted the effect of his words. The red had faded from the outraged citizen's face. His anger had cooled. He did not pretend to be a valiant, dauntless soul. He was just a plain citizen, and he had caught a glimpse of Ordway Trivett's point of view. It was an ugly glimpse, revealing elemental savagery and other things. It sent a shiver down the spine of Mr. Bunworth.

He was framing a weak, spiritless retort, when Elora Hawes appeared from behind the draperies; Elora, gowned showily, holding herself very erect. In her usually expressionless eyes burned strong emotion; on her vapid, exquisitely colored face shone the light of a newly kindled sentimentality, a fine frenzy of the moment.

"Ordway!" she exclaimed, making her way to him across the wreckage. "Ordway! I have heard it all! I think you are splendid, perfectly splendid!"

No longer does Trivett feel unkindly toward New York. In fact, he and Elora make it their home. But he is still revising Gotham with rock-drills and stick dynamite; not for revenge, but because it pays.

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The Eavesdropper

By BURGES JOHNSON

IF little boys don't hurry off to bed
On Christmas eve, an' try to go to sleep,
But stay awake an' hide around an' peep
(Er so the grown-up folks have always said),
Then Santa Claus'll frown an' shake his head,
An' gather all their presents in a heap—
Espeshully the ones they'd wanta keep—
An' give 'em all to other boys instead.

But every year I've wanted so to see!
An' maybe he'll not find me hiding here.
But if he *did*, an' left no toys for me,
I'd be ez glad I peeked—er pretty near.
Unless he was so cross that maybe he
Would take away the things he left last year!

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THE PLAYERS

PLAYS of Western life have been in fashion in New York during the past year—an admirable fashion promising much for the American drama, for it is out of that vast, indefinite "West" that the big story is likely to come. The spirit of life there is broader, freer, bigger; the people are franker in their sins of commission, and not smugly conscious of their virtues; they have a keener comprehension of the real things in this headlong national development of ours. Their feet rest more firmly on the honest soil; their heads are nearer the stars.

There have been bad Western dramas, painfully bad, but even the worst have in them something free and good. It is true that the typical stage Westerner, whom we know as well as we know our pockets, whether they be in trousers or handbag, never existed in the flesh. But then I don't believe that any one ever saw a ballot-box that looks like an hour-glass cut in two, nor a working man wearing a square paper cap; these are mere symbols, just as is the stage Westerner, of real things that no one dreams of questioning. So clearly defined are stage fictions of Western life in this country that English actors who had never been outside their native land were able to write, in "Sunday," a successful Western play.

With "The Virginian" continuing its long, prosperous career; with "The Squaw-Man" making a triumphant tour of the country; with "The Girl of the Golden West" starting forth on its travels after more than a solid year in New York, where it played to crowded houses to the very end, it hardly needed the two new dramas that have made such a pronounced hit in New York to emphasize the popularity of Western plays.

"The Great Divide" has a success that is phenomenal. Played in the only up-stairs theatre that charges maximum prices, a theatre that has been notorious for its failures, the triumph of the drama and of its chief players, Margaret Anglin and Henry Miller, was overwhelming at the first performance, and since then the house has been crowded to the doors. I cannot remember when the critics have been so unanimously extravagant in praising a new play. It was hailed as "marking an epoch in American playmaking," as "the great American play," and it was this acclaim that made it so popular.

Despite this and the box-office stamp of public approval, it seems to me that "The Great Divide," far from being great, is not even a good play. If this be the "great American play," or even its forerunner, there is small hope for the native drama. It is interesting, unusually interesting. For one thing it is written in admirable English—simple, clear, concise, direct, colloquial speech that is a delight. At least this is true of all the lines that can be heard, which, I should estimate, are about one-half of the whole. It is curious that one should not expect such dialogue from a college professor and a poet, nor is one prepared for a situation so strong, so vividly human as that which Professor William Vaughn Moody, of the University of Chicago, gives us in the first act of "The Great Divide," a situation so powerful that by contrast the remaining two acts are weak and insipid.

In the beginning it is made plain that a New England young woman and her brother have taken a ranch to mend the family fortunes, that she delights in the life of the free, unconventional West, and that she refuses to marry a young doctor who is devoted to her, on the ground that he is "finished." She wants a husband who hasn't gone through this process. In these earlier scenes Miss Anglin is delightful, a cheerful, lovable human being. And she rises to the big emotional scene that

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ALLA NAZIMOVA, WHO PLAYED HERE LAST YEAR IN RUSSIAN AND RETURNS THIS SEASON TO PLAY "HEDDA GABLER" IN ENGLISH.

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follows. There come to the cabin, where she is left all alone for the night, three drunken brutes who agree to shake dice for the possession of *Ruth Jordan*. To one of them, *Stephen Ghent*, the least depraved of the three, she makes a proposition to marry him if he will save her from the others. Plainly something has been omitted from the original play at this point, for the motive for his acceptance isn't at all clear. Indeed, it seems rather improbable. But he does agree. He succeeds in buying off the Mexican, who refuses his first offer, saying "a dirt-eating Mohave would pay more for a squaw," and he shoots the other man in an impromptu duel. It is not pretty, this scene, but it has the mighty strength of elemental passions.

Surely after such an act there is reason to look forward to a big drama. The curtain rises on the Catalina Mountains, with a magnificent perspective of ridge and cañon standing out in majestic splendor in the clear sunshine—a setting for great action. Eight months have elapsed since *Ruth* married *Ghent* and she is still wailing and weeping over that event, not so much because she had been forced to marry him, as because she is worried over the price he paid for her. You see, she accepts the Mexican's standard of her value, and in sober truth it seemed to me pretty high. Speedily I lost all interest in *Ruth*. She proves herself a selfish, narrow, sniveling sentimentalist, utterly undeserving of any pity or even consideration. I felt contemptuously sorry for *Ghent* because he cared for such a creature. He really should have been grateful when she deserted him to go back home to Massachusetts. Of course he was bound to follow her there, and they become reconciled in the last act. The original title of the play was "The Sabine Woman," which is thoroughly descriptive.

Photograph by Hallen, New York.
HENRY MILLER AS *STEPHEN GHENT*

Miss Anglin has long been distinguished as the weeping wonder of the stage. She can shed more tears with less provocation than any one I ever saw. In this play she sheds enough tears to irrigate a ranch in that desert country, for I am sure they are tears without salt.

When I was watching Miss Anglin, and struggling to catch an occasional word she uttered, I thought the responsibility for this wailing rested upon her; then it occurred to me that only a superficial cry-baby creature could behave as does *Ruth Jordan* in the second act. It is not conceivable that a flesh-and-blood woman could live for eight months under the conditions set forth by the author without coming to love the man, killing some one, or going insane.

Photograph by Burr McIntosh Studio, New York.
SAM BERNARD IN "THE RICH MR. HOGGENHEIMER."

It is a pleasant thing to praise Henry Miller, even if it is true, as he says, that he never reads what is written about him; for there is no more painstaking, hard-working, and sincere actor on the stage. He plays *Ghent* with a repression, a straightforwardness, a real strength that make it perhaps the best performance of his long career. He really has repose, and in nothing is he more effective than when he is listening to the drivel of his wife.

The joy of the performance is Laura Hope Crews. Professor Moody has given her lines written in clear, crisp, colloquial

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AND MARGARET ANGLIN AS *RUTH JORDAN* IN "THE GREAT DIVIDE."

English, the kind of lines a clever, fun-loving, natural girl would speak, and Miss Crews makes *Polly Jordan* the best comedy creation of the winter.

"The Three of Us" came along without preliminary acclaim when "The Great Divide" was in the full tide of its success. It, too, is a Western play, or rather a human play in a Western setting, for all of the characters in the Nevada mining-camp are from Eastern cities. It is a homely, simple, natural story told with such directness, such fine feeling, such genuine sincerity and real humor by Rachel Crothers, that one is surprised to know that she is a beginner in play-writing, until one learns that she comes

Photograph by Hall, New York.

RICHARD CARLE AND CHORUS IN "THE SPRING CHICKEN."

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Photograph by Hall, New York.

ELEANOR ROBSON IN THE TITLE RÔLE, W. A. HACKETT AS *DR. LATCHETT*, AND H. B. WARNER AS *JOHN DANBURY* IN "NURSE MARJORIE."

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Photograph by Lizzie Caswell Smith, London, Eng.

FORBES ROBERTSON AS *CÆSAR* IN "CÆSAR AND CLEOPATRA."

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Photograph by Matzene Studio, Chicago.

EDNA WALLACE HOPPER AS *FANNIE FRIVOL* IN "ABOUT TOWN."

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from Indianapolis. The Indiana school of letters is not to be judged by ordinary standards. It is true that the comedy hasn't a big theme and that there is a flimsy foundation for the strong scene in the third act, but one doesn't care a hang about these things, because the play is so absorbingly interesting, so wholesome, so natural, so thoroughly good. It throbs with honest sentiment; its people are real—the kind of people one likes to know and to have for one's friends. That, by the way, is not a bad test for a play. For instance, "The House of Mirth," cleverly dramatized by Clyde Fitch and beautifully played by Fay Davis and an excellent company, was a complete failure for the reason that it could not meet that very test.

There are scores of little touches in "The Three of Us" that show keen insight into human nature and an appreciation of the qualities in us that are worth while. And this lively spirit of optimism, this kindly belief in people, which never descends to sentimentality but rises superior to a recognition of weaknesses, makes it a pretty big play after all. One leaves the theatre with a comfortable glow about one's heart and a little moisture in one's eyes.

The play is acted as well as it is written, and that is high praise. Carlotta Nillson shines luminously in a conspicuously fine cast. Never have I seen a stage portrayal freer from trickery or straining for effect. Miss Nillson dresses in a fashion one would expect of a woman in her position, and she acts with a naturalness that is something of a revelation. For a long time she played only weepy, emotional parts. Mrs. Fiske gave Miss Nillson her first opportunity in New York in "Hedda Gabler," when she proved herself an actress of subtlety and power. As *Rhy Macchesney* in "The Three of Us" she apparently tries to avoid being emotional, but when moments that demand emotional acting are thrust upon her, she is especially fine. It is in the quieter scenes, however, that she proves the perfection and finish of her art.

The feminine touch of authorship is shown in the characterization of *Clem*, *Rhy's* brother, who has arrived at that age where he thinks he must prove in a headstrong, kid fashion that he is a man. Only a woman who knows the cub at that stage in his career could draw the character with such fidelity, humor, and understanding of his strength and weakness. John Westley plays *Clem* just as it should be played, and one cannot say more than that.

Almost unheralded there came into New York an actress whose name meant little even to those who keep abreast of theatrical affairs. They knew that she had scored a great success in "Mrs. Dane's Defense," when it was produced in London, and that the play in which she was appearing here, "The Shulamite," had had a long run in England. She remained a few weeks on Broadway without making any particular impression and then went "on the road." And yet, in my judgment, Lena Ashwell is the greatest English-speaking actress, the only one on the stage who can be compared with Duse without suffering. I cannot remember when a play and a player have gripped me and held me enthralled as did "The Shulamite" and Lena Ashwell.

Between acts I tried to analyze her methods, hoping to discover the secret of that power that held me with an irresistible fascination when she was on the stage; but I failed utterly. She compels those who can understand, to bear a part of the intense strain under which the young wife of the old Boer is laboring, so great is her realism. And yet so quiet are her methods that she never seems to be acting at all. And this is the reason why Miss Ashwell made no stir in New York. No one had told the highly cultured, critical audiences that she was one of the greatest living actresses; they knew that about Duse before she ever stepped foot on American soil. A taste that has been debauched by ladies who act all over the stage, act by main strength from the rise of the curtain to the going down of the same every minute they are before the footlights, has difficulty in recognizing the value of anything else. It is interesting and significant to record that outside of the metropolis Miss Ashwell was far better understood and appreciated.

Also it seems to me that "The Shulamite" is a great big play, which declaration flies in the face of self-constituted authority. It is a powerful, moving drama abounding in situations that are tremendous. It moves swiftly, logically, without claptrap, and it has an undertone of tragedy that gives it splendid dignity. And this is all the more remarkable when it is understood that the drama is carried on by practically three persons, one of whom is killed in the second act.

The success of the stage version of "Ben Hur," which has been seen by millions of people, is responsible for the adaptation of Gen-

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eral Lew Wallace's other story, "The Prince of India," put into blank verse by J. I. C. Clarke. It is intended to appeal to people who seldom go to the theatre, but the story is so clearly, so logically, so poetically told, and it is so rich in situations that those among regular theatregoers who love romance must be held by it. As a spectacle it is magnificent, with its succession of splendid pictures, its great numbers of people, and the gorgeous costuming. There are admirable players. It is a pleasure to see, in the rôle of *Prince Mohammed*, so fine an actor as William Farnum, a brother of Dustin Farnum of "The Virginian" fame. He presents the character with a real appreciation of its poetic dignity. One of the few modern actors who have mastered the neglected art of elocution, he has nevertheless been a road and stock star for years while ever so many leading men with a small part of his ability have loitered comfortably through Broadway plays. Then there are Emmet Corrigan in the title rôle, the excellent Boyd Putnam as the *Emperor Constantine*, and Anthony André as the Moslem spy, while Adelaide Keim, an actress of wide experience—she has even played *Hamlet* successfully—is the *Princess Irene*.

"Nurse Marjorie," which Israel Zangwill wrote for Eleanor Robson, hoping it would prove another "Merely Mary Ann," is pretty poor stuff for a play or anything else, for that matter, but the star scores by virtue of her charming personality, her delicate humor, and her genuine sentiment. Miss Robson is so lovely to look upon and her diction is so perfect that it is worth while sitting through a fairly stupid play when she has the principal rôle. The trouble with "Nurse Marjorie" is fundamental; its story is not worth the telling, and the result is a theatric, made-up, unconvincing comedy that bores one a deal of the time. One suspects that Mr. Zangwill had his chief satisfaction in feeding his ancient grudge against the rich middle class in England, which he satirizes cleverly. The acting honors go to that remarkably versatile Reuben Fax, whose Newcastle shipbuilder is another addition to his long list of brilliant characterizations. Miss Robson has a new leading man in a very blond young Englishman, H. B. Warner, a son of that really great actor, Charles Warner, who has played "Drink" so many thousands of times. The son has inherited much of his father's talent.

William Gillette, whom many people consider foremost among American playwrights, devoted five years to "Clarice," and it is not worth five days of honest work, if one takes it as a whole. On the other hand, there is one comedy scene that is delicious, one of the most exquisite bits of dainty foolery I ever saw. It is where the middle-aged country doctor and his charming ward, who has grown up from babyhood under his care, try to eat dinner just after they discover that they are madly in love with each other. They have to deceive an old Southern "mammy" who is bound to make them eat, and who, by the way, as played by Lucille La Verne, is the hit of the play.

"Clarice" abounds in ingenious stage devices, and it is finely acted, but somehow it doesn't ring true. All that is important in the story could be compressed into a single act. It swings pendulum-wise between realism and make-believe and the result is disastrous. Mr. Gillette is admirable, as he always is, and his personal popularity makes the comedy-drama a financial success.

After many years devoted to playing a wide range of parts, from that of a young lover to *Shylock*, N. C. Goodwin has returned to farce, in which he made his first great success. "The Genius" is a lively, cheerful conceit, written to provoke laughter, and its chief merit lies in giving Mr. Goodwin a chance to display his remarkable art. He has plenty to do, and one doubts if there is another living comedian who could do it as well. And there is not the slightest suggestion of effort. He was far better in serious rôles than people gave him credit for being, but, after all, his mission in life is to make people laugh. The farce was written by William C. DeMille, author of "Strongheart," in collaboration with his brother Cecil. It was originally called "The Genius and the Model," and Edna Goodrich, a really and truly original Florodora "sextetter," starred in it without success. She still plays the part of the model, and not badly, with Mr. Goodwin, who proves what one actor can accomplish; for it is hardly conceivable that New York would care much for the farce without him.

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BEFORE ADAM

By JACK LONDON

Author of "The Call of the Wild," "The Sea Wolf," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALMENTS.—Big-Tooth is one of the Tree-Folk who lived in the far-off Mid-Pleistocene period. Thousands of years later he relives his experiences in the dream-memories of the author, who weaves these memories into the autobiography of Big-Tooth. The Tree-Folk baby's adventures begin with his escape from a murderous attack of wild boars. Later, his father dies and his mother marries a cruel ape-man, "The Chatterer," who drives the infant Big-Tooth from his tree home. After long wandering, the outcast comes upon a settlement of Cave-Folk and first encounters the formidable Red-Eye. There, too, he gains, in Lop-Ear, a comrade in adventure. From their common cave, the two help the horde pelt Saber-Tooth, the tiger. In a game of tree-tag they are attacked by a dreaded Fire-Man, and Big-Tooth is wounded. Afterward, the youngsters provoke the wrath of Red-Eye, who attacks them in their cave. Though they worst him, they dare not remain within his reach. Fleeing, they come to the river and by accident learn to paddle. Here they meet the Swift One, whose comeliness strongly attracts Big-Tooth. But here, too, Red-Eye finds them, and again they are forced to flee. For tormenting one of their number the Tree-Folk chase the wanderers into the mountains. Thence they reach the land of the hostile Fire People.

CHAPTER XIII

WHAT must have been a band of wandering hunters went into camp not far from the tree in which Lop-Ear and I had elected to roost for the night. The voices of these Fire People at first alarmed us, but later, when darkness had come, we were attracted by the fire. We crept cautiously and silently from tree to tree till we got a good view of the scene.

In an open space among the trees, near to the river, the fire was burning. About it were half a dozen Fire-Men. Lop-Ear clutched me suddenly, and I could feel him tremble. I looked more closely, and saw the wizened little old hunter who had shot Broken-Tooth out of the tree long before. When he got up and walked about, throwing fresh wood upon the fire, I saw that he still limped with his crippled leg. He seemed more dried up and wizened than ever, and the hair on his face was quite gray.

The other hunters were young men. I noted, lying near them on the ground, their bows and arrows, and I knew the weapons for what they were. The Fire-Men wore animal skins around their waists and across their shoulders. Their arms and legs, however, were bare, and they wore no foot-gear. As I have said before, they were not quite so hairy as we of the Folk. They did not have large heads, and between them and the Folk there was very little difference in the degree of the slant of the head back from the eyes.

They were less stooped than we, less springy in their movements. Their backbones and hips and knee-joints seemed more rigid. Their arms were not so long as ours either, and I did not notice that they ever balanced themselves, when they walked, by touching the ground on either side with their hands. Also, their muscles were more rounded and symmetrical than ours, and their faces were more pleasing. Their nose-orifices opened downward; likewise the bridges of their noses were more developed, and did not look so squat nor crushed as ours. Their lips were less flabby and pendent, and their eye-teeth did not look so much like fangs. However, they were quite as thin-hipped as we, and did not weigh much more. Take it all

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in all, they were less different from us than were we from the Tree People. Certainly, all three kinds were related, and not so remotely related at that.

The fire around which they were gathered was very attractive. Lop-Ear and I sat for hours watching the flames and smoke. It was most fascinating when fresh fuel was thrown on and showers of sparks went flying upward. I wanted to go closer and look at the fire, but there was no way. We were crouching in the forks of a tree on the edge of the open space, and we did not dare run the risk of being discovered.

The Fire-Men squatted around the fire and slept with their heads bowed forward on their knees. They did not sleep soundly. Their ears twitched in their sleep, and they were restless. Every little while one or another got up and threw more wood upon the fire. About the circle of light in the forest, in the darkness beyond, roamed hunting animals. Lop-Ear and I could tell them by their sounds. There were wild dogs and a hyena, and for a time there was a great yelping and snarling that awakened on the instant the whole circle of sleeping Fire-Men.

Once a lion and a lioness stood beneath our tree and gazed out with bristling hair and blinking eyes. The lion licked his chops and was nervous with eagerness, as if he wanted to go forward and make a meal. But the lioness was more cautious. It was she that discovered us, and the pair stood and looked up at us, silently, with twitching, scenting nostrils. Then they growled, looked once again at the fire, and turned away into the forest.

For a much longer time Lop-Ear and I remained and watched. Now and again we could hear the crashing of heavy bodies in the thickets and underbrush, and from the darkness of the other side, across the circle, we could see eyes gleaming in the firelight. In the distance we heard a lion roar, and from far off came the scream of some stricken animal, splashing and floundering in a drinking-place. Also from the river came a great grunting of rhinoceroses.

In the morning, after having had our sleep, we crept down to the fire. It was still smoldering, but the Fire-Men were gone. We made a circle through the forest to make sure, and then we ran to the fire. I wanted to see what it was like, and between thumb and finger I picked up a glowing coal. My cry of pain and fear, as I dropped it, stampeded Lop-Ear into the trees, and his flight frightened me after him.

The next time we came back more cautiously, and we avoided the glowing coals. We fell to imitating the Fire-Men. We squatted down by the fire, and, with heads bent forward on our knees, made believe to sleep. Then we mimicked their speech, talking to each other in their fashion and making a great gibberish. I remembered seeing the wizened old hunter poke the fire with a stick. I poked the fire with a stick, turning up masses of live coals and clouds of white ashes. This was great sport, and soon we were coated white with the ashes.

It was inevitable that we should imitate the Fire-Men in replenishing the fire. We tried at first with small pieces of wood. It was a success. The wood flamed up and crackled, and we danced and gibbered with delight. Then we began to throw on larger pieces of wood. We put on more and more, until we had a mighty fire. We dashed excitedly back and forth, dragging dead limbs and branches from out the forest. The flames soared higher and higher, and the smoke-column outtowered the trees. There was a tremendous snapping and crackling and roaring. It was the most monumental work we had ever effected with our hands, and we were proud of it. We, too, were Fire-Men, we thought, as we danced there, white gnomes in the conflagration.

The dried grass and underbrush caught fire, but we did not notice it. Suddenly a great tree on the edge of the open space burst into flames. We looked at it with startled eyes. The heat of it drove us back. Another tree caught, and another, and then half a dozen. We were frightened. The monster had broken loose. We crouched down in fear, while the fire ate around the circle and hemmed us in. Into Lop-Ear's eyes came the plaintive look that always accompanied incomprehension, and I know that in my eyes must have been the same look. We huddled down, with our arms around each other, until the heat began to reach us and the odor of burning hair was in our nostrils. Then we made a dash of it, and fled away westward through the forest, looking back and laughing as we ran.

By the middle of the day we came to a neck of land, made, as we afterward discovered, by a great curve of the river that almost completed a circle. Right across the neck lay bunched several low and partly wooded

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hills. Over these we climbed, looking backward at the forest, which had become a sea of flame that swept eastward before a rising wind. We continued to the west, following the river bank, and before we knew it we were in the midst of the abiding-place of the Fire People.

This abiding-place was a splendid strategic selection. It was a peninsula, protected on three sides by the curving river. On only one side was it accessible by land. This was the narrow neck of the peninsula, and here the several low hills were a natural obstacle. Practically isolated from the rest of the world, the Fire People must have here lived and prospered for a long time. In fact, I think it was their prosperity that was responsible for the subsequent migration that worked such calamity upon the Folk. The Fire People must have increased in numbers until they pressed uncomfortably against the bounds of their habitat. They were expanding, and in the course of their expanding they drove the Folk before them and settled down themselves in the caves and occupied the territory that we had occupied.

But Lop-Ear and I little dreamed of all this when we found ourselves in the Fire People's stronghold. We had but one idea, and that was to get away, though we could not forbear humoring our curiosity by peeping out upon the village. For the first time we saw the women and children of the Fire People. The latter ran for the most part naked, though the former wore skins of wild animals.

The Fire People, like ourselves, lived in caves. In the open space that sloped from the caves down to the river burned many small fires. But whether or not the Fire People cooked their food, I do not know. Lop-Ear and I did not see them cook. Yet it is my opinion that they surely must have performed some sort of rude cookery. Like us, they carried water in gourds from the river. There was much coming and going, and loud cries made by the women and children. The latter played about and cut up antics quite in the same way as did the children of the Folk, whom they more nearly resembled than did the grown Fire People resemble the grown Folk.

Lop-Ear and I did not linger long. We saw some of the part-grown boys shooting with bow and arrow, and we sneaked back into the thicker forest and made our way to the river. And there we found a catamaran, a real catamaran, one evidently made by some Fire-Man. The two logs were small and straight, and were lashed together by means of tough roots and crosspieces of wood.

This time the idea occurred simultaneously to us. We were trying to escape out of the Fire People's territory. What better way than by crossing the river on these logs? We climbed on board and shoved off. A sudden something gripped the catamaran and flung it down-stream violently against the bank. The abrupt stoppage almost whipped us off into the water. The catamaran was tied to a tree by a rope of twisted roots. This we untied before shoving off again.

By the time we had paddled well out into the current, we had drifted so far down-stream that we were in full view of the Fire People's abiding-place. So occupied were we with our paddling, our eyes fixed upon the other bank, that we knew nothing of this until aroused by a yell from the shore. We looked around. There were the Fire People, many of them, looking at us and pointing at us, and more were crawling out of the caves. We sat up to watch, and forgot all about paddling. There was a great hullabaloo on the shore. Some of the Fire-Men discharged their bows at us, and a few of the arrows fell near us, but the range was too great.

It was a great day for Lop-Ear and me. To the east the conflagration we had started was filling half the sky with smoke. And here we were, perfectly safe in the middle of the river that encircled the Fire People's stronghold. We sat and laughed at them as we dashed by, swinging south, and southeast to east, and even to northeast, and then east again, southeast and south and on around to the west, a great double curve where the river nearly tied a knot in itself.

As we swept on to the west, the Fire People far behind, a familiar scene flashed upon our eyes. It was the great drinking-place where we had wandered once or twice to watch the circus of the animals when they came down to drink. Beyond it, we knew, was the carrot-patch, and beyond that the caves and the abiding-place of the horde. We began to paddle for the bank that slid swiftly past, and before we knew it we were down upon the drinking-places. There were the women and children, the water-carriers, a number of them, filling their gourds. At sight of us they stampeded madly up the runways, leaving behind them a trail of gourds they had dropped.

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We landed, and of course we neglected to tie up the catamaran, which floated off down the river. Right cautiously we crept up a runway. The Folk had all disappeared into their holes, though here and there we could see a face peering out at us. There was no sign of Red-Eye. We were home again. And that night we slept in our own little cave high up on the cliff, though first we had to evict a couple of pugnacious youngsters who had taken possession.

CHAPTER XIV

THE months came and went. The drama and tragedy of the future were yet to come upon the stage, and in the meantime we pounded nuts and lived. It was a good year, I remember, for nuts. We used to fill gourds with nuts and carry them to the pounding-places. We placed them in depressions in the rock, and, with a piece of rock in our hands, we cracked them, and ate them as we cracked.

It was the fall of the year when Lop-Ear and I returned from our long adventure journey, and the winter that followed was mild. I made frequent trips to the neighborhood of my old home-tree, and frequently I searched the whole territory that lay between the blueberry-swamp and the mouth of the slough where Lop-Ear and I had learned navigation, but no clue could I get to the Swift One. She had disappeared. And I wanted her. But all my search was vain.

Life was not monotonous at the caves, however. There was Red-Eye to be considered. Lop-Ear and I never knew a moment's peace except when we were in our own little cave. In spite of the enlargement of the entrance we had made, it was still a tight squeeze for us to get in. And though from time to time we continued to enlarge the entrance, it was still too small for Red-Eye's monstrous body. But he never stormed our cave again. He had learned the lesson well, and he carried on his neck a bulging lump to show where I had hit him with the rock. This lump never went away, and it was prominent enough to be seen at a distance. I often took great delight in looking at that evidence of my handiwork, and sometimes, when I was myself assuredly safe, the sight of it caused me to laugh.

While the other Folk would not have come to our rescue had Red-Eye proceeded to tear Lop-Ear and me to pieces before their eyes, nevertheless they sympathized with us. Possibly it was not sympathy but the expression of their hatred for Red-Eye; at any rate they always warned us of his approach. Whether in the forest, at the drinking-places, or in the open space before the caves, they were always quick to warn us. Thus we had the advantage of many eyes in our feud with Red-Eye, the atavism.

Once he nearly got me. It was early in the morning, and the Folk were not yet up. The surprise was complete. I was cut off from the way up the cliff to my cave. Before I knew it I had dashed into the double cave—the cave where Lop-Ear had first eluded me long years before, and where old Saber-Tooth had come to discomfiture when he pursued the two Folk. By the time I had got through the connecting passage between the two caves, I discovered that Red-Eye was not following me. The next moment he charged into the cave from the outside. I slipped back through the passage, and he charged out and around and in upon me again. I merely repeated my performance of slipping through the passage.

He kept me there half a day before he gave up. After that, when Lop-Ear and I were reasonably sure of gaining the double cave, we did not retreat up the cliff to our own when Red-Eye came upon the scene. All we did was to keep an eye on him and see that he did not cut across our line of retreat.

It was during this winter that Red-Eye killed his latest wife with abuse and repeated beatings. I have called him an atavism, but in this he was worse than an atavism, for the males of the lower animals do not maltreat and murder their mates. In this I take it that Red-Eye, in spite of his tremendous atavistic tendencies, foreshadowed the coming of man, for it is the males of the human species only that murder their mates.

As was to be expected, with the doing away of one wife Red-Eye proceeded to get another. He decided upon the Singing One. She was the granddaughter of old Marrow-Bone, and the daughter of the Hairless One. She was a young thing, greatly given to singing at the mouth of her cave in the twilight, and she had but recently mated with Crooked-Leg. He was a quiet individual, molesting no one and not given to bickering with his fellows. He was no fighter anyway. He was small and lean, and not so active on his legs as the rest of us.

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Red-Eye never committed a more outrageous deed. It was in the quiet at the end of the day, when we began to congregate in the open space before climbing into our caves. Suddenly the Singing One dashed up a runway from a drinking-place, pursued by Red-Eye. She ran to her husband. Poor little Crooked-Leg was terribly scared. But he was a hero. He knew that death was upon him, yet he did not run away. He stood up, and chattered, bristling, showing his teeth.

Red-Eye roared with rage. It was an offense to him that any of the Folk should dare to withstand him. His hand shot out and clutched Crooked-Leg by the neck. The latter sank his teeth into Red-Eye's arm; but the next moment, with a broken neck, Crooked-Leg was floundering and squirming on the ground. The Singing One screeched and gibbered. Red-Eye seized her by the hair of her head and dragged her toward his cave. He handled her roughly when the climb began, and he dragged and hauled her up into the cave.

We were very angry, insanely, vociferously angry. Beating our chests, bristling, and gnashing our teeth, we gathered together in our rage. We felt the prod of gregarious instinct, the drawing together as though for united action, the impulse toward cooperation. In dim ways this need for united action was impressed upon us. But there was no way to achieve it because there was no way to express it. We did not turn to, all of us, and destroy Red-Eye, because we lacked a vocabulary. We were vaguely thinking thoughts for which there were no thought-symbols. These thought-symbols were yet to be slowly and painfully invented.

We tried to freight sound with the vague thoughts that flitted like shadows through our consciousness. The Hairless One began to chatter loudly. By his noises he expressed anger against Red-Eye and desire to hurt him. Thus far he got, and thus far we understood. But when he tried to express the cooperative impulse that stirred within him, his noises became gibberish. Then Big-Face, with brow bristling and hands pounding his chest, began to chatter. One after another of us joined in the orgy of rage, until even old Marrow-Bone was mumbling and spluttering with his cracked voice and withered lips. Some one seized a stick and began pounding a log. In a moment he had struck a rhythm. Unconsciously our yells and exclamations yielded to this rhythm. It had a soothing effect upon us; and before we knew it, our rage forgotten, we were in the full swing of a hee-hee council.

These hee-hee councils splendidly illustrate the inconsequentiality of the Folk. Here were we, drawn together by mutual rage and the impulse toward cooperation, led off into forgetfulness by the establishment of a rude rhythm. We were sociable and gregarious, and these singing and laughing councils satisfied us. In some ways the hee-hee council was an adumbration of the councils of primitive man, and of the great national assemblies and international conventions of latter-day man. But we Folk of the Younger World lacked speech, and whenever we were so drawn together we precipitated Babel, out of which arose a unanimity of rhythm that contained within itself the essentials of art yet to come. It was art nascent.

There was nothing long-continued about these rhythms that we struck. A rhythm was soon lost, and pandemonium reigned until we could find the rhythm again or start a new one. Sometimes half a dozen rhythms would be swinging simultaneously, each one backed by a group that strove ardently to drown out the others.

In the quiet intervals each chattered, cut up, hooted, screeched, and danced, himself sufficient unto himself, filled with his own ideas and volitions to the exclusion of all others, a veritable center of the universe, divorced for the time being from any unanimity with the other universe centers leaping and yelling around him. Then would come the rhythm—a clapping of hands; the beating of a stick upon a log; a repeated leaping in some particular manner; or the chanting of one that uttered, explosively and regularly, with inflection that rose and fell, "A-bang, a-bang! A-bang, a-bang!" One after another of the self-centered Folk would yield to the suggestion, and soon all would be dancing or chanting in chorus. "Ha-ah, ha-ah, ha-ah-ha!" was one of our favorite choruses, and another was, "Eh-wah, eh-wah, eh-wah-hah!"

And so, with mad antics, leaping, reeling, and overbalancing, we danced and sang in the somber twilight of the primeval world, inducing forgetfulness, achieving unanimity, and working ourselves up into sensuous frenzy. And so it was that our rage against Red-Eye was soothed away by art, and we screamed the wild choruses of the hee-hee council until the night warned us of its ter-

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rors and we crept away to our holes in the rocks, calling softly to one another, while the stars came out and darkness settled down.

We were afraid only of the dark. We had no germs of religion, no conceptions of an unseen world. We knew only the real world, and the things we feared were the real things, the concrete dangers, the flesh-and-blood animals that preyed. It was they that made us afraid of the dark, for darkness was the time of the hunting animals. It was then that they came out of their lairs and pounced upon us from the dark wherein they lurked invisible.

Possibly it was out of this fear of the real denizens of the dark that the fear of the unreal denizens was later to develop and to culminate in a whole, mighty unseen world. As imagination grew it is likely that the fear of death increased until the Folk that were to come projected this fear into the dark and peopled the dark with spirits. I think the Fire People had already begun to be afraid of the dark in this fashion; but the reasons we Folk had for breaking up our hee-hee councils and fleeing to our holes were old Saber-Tooth, the lions and the jackals, the wild dogs and the wolves, and all the other hungry, meat-eating breeds.

CHAPTER XV

Lop-Ear got married. It was the second winter after our adventure journey, and it was most unexpected. He gave me no warning. The first I knew was one twilight when I climbed the cliff to our cave. I squeezed into the entrance and there I stopped. There was no room for me. Lop-Ear and his mate were in possession, and she was none other than my sister, the daughter of my stepfather, the Chatterer.

I tried to force my way in. There was space only for two, and that space was already occupied. Also, they had me at a disadvantage, and what of the scratching and hair-pulling I received, I was glad to retreat. I slept that night, and for many nights, in the connecting passage of the double cave. From my experience it seemed reasonably safe. As the two Folk had dodged old Saber-Tooth, and as I had dodged Red-Eye, so it seemed to me that I could dodge the hunting animals by going back and forth between the two caves.

I had forgotten the wild dogs. They were small enough to go through any passage that I could squeeze through. One night they nosed me out. Had they entered both caves at the same time they would have got me. As it was, followed by some of them through the passage, I dashed out at the mouth of the other cave. Outside were the rest of the wild dogs. They leaped for me, as I sprang for the cliff wall and began to climb. One of them, a lean and hungry brute, caught me in mid-leap. His teeth sank into my thigh-muscles, and he nearly dragged me back. He held on, but I made no effort to dislodge him, devoting my whole energy to climbing out of reach of the rest of the brutes.

Not until I was safe from them did I turn my attention to that live agony on my thigh. And then, a dozen feet above the snapping pack that leaped and scrambled against the wall and fell back, I got the dog by the throat and slowly throttled him. I was a long time doing it. He clawed and ripped my hair and hide with his hind paws, and ever he jerked and lunged with his weight to drag me from the wall.

At last his teeth opened and released my torn flesh. I carried his body up the cliff with me, and perched out the night in the entrance of my old cave, wherein were Lop-Ear and my sister. But first I had to endure a storm of abuse from the aroused horde for being the cause of the disturbance. I had my revenge. From time to time, as the noise of the pack below eased down, I dropped a rock and started it up again. Whereupon, from all around, the abuse of the exasperated Folk began afresh. In the morning I shared the dog with Lop-Ear and his wife, and for several days the three of us were neither vegetarians nor fruitarians.

Lop-Ear's marriage was not a happy one, and the consolation about it is that it did not last very long. Neither he nor I was happy during that period. I was lonely. I suffered the inconvenience of being cast out of my safe little cave, and somehow I did not make it up with any other of the young males. I suppose my long-continued chumming with Lop-Ear had become a habit.

I might have married, it is true; and most likely I should have done so, had it not been for the dearth of females in the horde. This dearth, it is fair to assume, was caused by the exorbitance of Red-Eye, and it illustrates the menace he was to the existence of the horde. Then there was the Swift One, whom I had not forgotten.

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At any rate, during the period of Lop-Ear's marriage I knocked about from pillar to post, in danger every night that I slept, and never comfortable. One of the Folk died, and his widow was taken into the cave of another one of the Folk. I took possession of the abandoned cave, but it was wide-mouthed, and after Red-Eye nearly trapped me in it one day, I returned to sleeping in the passage of the double cave. During the summer, however, I used to stay away from the abiding-place for weeks, sleeping in a tree-shelter I made near the mouth of the slough.

I have said that Lop-Ear was not happy. My sister was the daughter of the Chatterer, and she made Lop-Ear's life miserable for him. In no cave was there so much squabbling and bickering. If Red-Eye was a Bluebeard, Lop-Ear was henpecked; and I imagine that Red-Eye was too shrewd ever to covet Lop-Ear's wife.

Fortunately for Lop-Ear, she died. An unusual thing happened that summer. Late, almost at the end of it, a second crop of the stringy-rooted carrots sprang up. These unexpected second-crop roots were young and juicy and tender, and for some time the carrot-patch was the favorite feeding-place of the horde. One morning, early, several score of us were there making our breakfast. On one side of me was the Hairless One. Beyond him were his father and his son, old Marrow-Bone and Long-Lip. On the other side of me were Lop-Ear and my sister, she being next to me.

There was no warning. On the sudden, both the Hairless One and my sister sprang and screamed. At the same instant I heard the thud of the arrows that transfixed them. The next instant they were down on the ground, floundering and gasping, and the rest of us were stampeding for the trees. An arrow drove past me and entered the ground, its feathered shaft vibrating and oscillating from the impact of its arrested flight. I remember clearly how I swerved as I ran, to go past it, and that I gave it a needlessly wide berth. I must have shied at it as a horse shies at an object it fears.

Lop-Ear took a smashing fall as he ran beside me. An arrow had driven through the calf of his leg and tripped him. He tried to run, but was tripped and thrown by it a second time. He sat up, crouching, trembling with fear, and called to me pleadingly. I dashed back. He showed me the arrow. I caught hold of it to pull it out, as he had once done for me, but the consequent hurt made him seize my hand and stop me. A flying arrow passed between us. Another struck a rock, splintered, and fell to the ground. This was too much. I pulled, suddenly, with all my might. Lop-Ear screamed as the arrow came out, and struck at me angrily. But the next moment we were in full flight again.

I looked back. Old Marrow-Bone, deserted and far behind, was tottering silently along in his handicapped race with death. Sometimes he almost fell, and once he did fall; but no more arrows were coming. He scrambled weakly to his feet. Age burdened him heavily, but he did not want to die. The three Fire-Men, who were now running forward from their forest ambush, could easily have got him, but they did not try. Perhaps he was too old and tough. But they did want the Hairless One and my sister, for as I looked back from the trees I could see the Fire-Men beating in their heads with rocks. One of the Fire-Men was the wizened old hunter who limped.

We went on through the trees toward the caves—an excited and disorderly mob that drove before it to their holes all the small life of the forest, and that set the blue jays screaming impudently. Now that there was no immediate danger, Long-Lip waited for his grandfather, Marrow-Bone; and with the gap of a generation between them, the old fellow and the youth brought up our rear.

And so it was that Lop-Ear became a bachelor once more. That night I slept with him in the old cave, and our old life of chumming began again. The loss of his mate seemed to cause him no grief. At least he showed no signs of it, nor of need for her. It was the wound in his leg that seemed to bother him, and it was all of a week before he got back again to his old spryness.

Marrow-Bone was the only old member in the horde. Sometimes, on looking back upon him, when the vision of him is most clear, I note a striking resemblance between him and the father of my father's gardener. The gardener's father was very old, very wrinkled, and withered; and when he peered through his tiny, bleary eyes and mumbled with his toothless gums, he looked and acted for all the world like old Marrow-Bone. This resemblance used to frighten me as a child. I always ran when I saw the old man tottering along on his two canes. Old Marrow-Bone even had a bit of sparse and straggly

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white beard that seemed identical with the whiskers of the old man.

As I have said, Marrow-Bone was the only old member of the horde. He was an exception. The Folk never lived to old age. Middle age was fairly rare. They died as my father had died, as Broken-Tooth had died, as my sister and the Hairless One had just died—abruptly and brutally, in the full possession of their faculties, in the full swing and rush of life. Natural death? To die violently was the natural way of dying in those days.

I never knew of a case of death from old age among the Folk. Even Marrow-Bone did not die that way, and he was the only one in my generation who had the chance. A bad crippling, any serious accidental or temporary impairment of the faculties, meant swift death. As a rule, these deaths were not witnessed. Members of the horde simply dropped out of sight. They left the caves in the morning, and they never came back. They disappeared—into the ravenous maws of the hunting creatures.

This inroad of the Fire People on the carrot-patch was the beginning of the end, though we did not know it. The hunters of the Fire People began to appear more frequently as the time went by. They came in twos and threes, creeping silently through the forest, with their flying arrows able to annihilate distance and bring down prey from the top of the loftiest tree without themselves climbing into it. The bow and arrow was like an enormous extension of their leaping and striking muscles, so that virtually they could leap and kill at a hundred feet and more. This made them far more terrible than Saber-Tooth himself. And then they were very wise. They had speech that enabled them to reason more effectively than we, and in addition they understood cooperation.

We Folk came to be very circumspect when we were in the forest. We were more alert and vigilant, and timid. No longer were the trees a protection to be relied upon. No longer could we perch on a branch and laugh down at our carnivorous enemies on the ground. The Fire People were carnivorous, with claws and fangs a hundred feet long, the most terrible of all the hunting animals that ranged the primeval world.

One morning, before the Folk had dispersed to the forest, there was a panic among the water-carriers and those who had gone down to the river to drink. The whole horde fled to the caves. It was our habit, at such times, to flee first and investigate afterward. We waited in the mouths of our caves and watched. After some time a Fire-Man stepped cautiously into the open space. It was the little wizened old hunter. He stood for a long time and watched us, looking our caves and the cliff wall up and down. He descended one of the runways to a drinking-place, returning a few minutes later by another runway. Again he stood and watched us carefully for a long time. Then he turned on his heel and limped into the forest, leaving us calling querulously and plaintively to one another from the cave-mouths.

CHAPTER XVI

I FOUND her down in the old neighborhood near the blueberry-swamp, where my mother lived and where Lop-Ear and I had built our first tree-shelter. It was unexpected. As I came under the tree I heard the familiar soft sound and looked up. There she was, the Swift One, sitting on a limb and swinging her legs back and forth as she looked at me.

I stood still for some time. The sight of her had made me very happy. And then an unrest and a pain began to creep in on this happiness. I started to climb the tree after her, and she retreated slowly out the limb. Just as I reached for her, she sprang through the air and landed in the branches of the next tree. From amid the rustling leaves she peeped out at me and made soft sounds. I leaped straight for her, and after an exciting chase the situation was duplicated, for there she was, making soft sounds and peeping out from the leaves of a third tree.

It was borne in upon me that somehow it was not the same now as in the old days before Lop-Ear and I had gone on our adventure journey. I wanted her, and I knew that I wanted her. And she knew it too. That was why she would not let me come near her. I forgot that she was truly the Swift One, and that in the art of climbing she had been my teacher. I pursued her from tree to tree, and ever she eluded me, peeping back at me with kindly eyes, making soft sounds, and dancing and leaping and teetering before me just out of reach. The more she eluded me, the more I wanted to catch her, and the lengthening shadows of the afternoon bore witness to the futility of my effort.

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As I pursued her, or sometimes rested in an adjoin ng tree and watched her, I noticed the change in her. She was larger, heavier, more grown up. Her lines were rounder, her muscles fuller, and there was about her that indefinite something of maturity that was new to her and that incited me on. Four years she had been gone—four years at the very least, and the change in her was marked.

Where she went, why she went, and what happened to her during that time, I do not know. There was no way for her to tell me, any more than there was a way for Lop-Ear and me to tell the Folk what we had seen when we were away. The chance is that, like us, she had gone off on an adventure journey, and by herself. On the other hand, it is possible that Red-Eye may have been the cause of her going. From subsequent events I am led to believe that she must have traveled far to the south, across a range of mountains and down to the banks of a strange river, away from any of her kind. Many Tree People lived down there, and I think it must have been they who finally drove her back to the horde and to me. My reasons for this I shall explain later.

The shadows grew longer, and I pursued more ardently than ever, and still I could not catch her. She made believe that she was trying desperately to escape me, and all the time she managed to keep just beyond reach. I forgot everything—time, the oncoming of night, and my meat-eating enemies. I was insane with love of her, and with anger, too, because she would not let me come up with her. It was strange how this anger against her seemed to be part of my desire for her.

As I have said, I forgot everything. In racing across an open space I ran full tilt upon a colony of snakes. They did not deter me. I was mad. They struck at me, but I ducked and dodged and ran on. Then there was a python that ordinarily would have sent me screeching to a tree-top. He did run me into a tree; but the Swift One was going out of sight, and I sprang back to the ground and went on. It was a close shave. Then there was my old enemy, the hyena. From my conduct he was sure something was going to happen, and he followed me for an hour. Once we exasperated a band of wild pigs, and they took after us. The Swift One dared a wide leap between trees that was too much for me. I had to take to the ground. There were the pigs. I didn't care. I struck the earth within a yard of the nearest one. They flanked me as I ran, and chased me into two different trees out of the line of my pursuit of the Swift One. I ventured the ground again, doubled back, and crossed a wide open space with the whole band grunting, bristling, and tusk-gnashing at my heels.

If I had tripped or stumbled in that open space, there would have been no chance for me. But I didn't. And I didn't care whether I did or not. I was in such mood that I would have faced old Saber-Tooth himself, or a score of arrow-shooting Fire People. Such was the madness of love with me. With the Swift One it was different. She was very wise. She did not take any real risks; and I remember, on looking back across the centuries to that wild love-chase, that when the pigs delayed me she did not run away very fast, but waited, rather, for me to take up the pursuit again. Also, she directed her retreat before me, going always in the direction she wanted to go.

At last came the dark. She led me around the mossy shoulder of a cañon wall that outjutted among the trees. After that we penetrated a dense mass of underbrush that scraped and ripped me in passing. But she never ruffled a hair. She knew the way. In the midst of the thicket was a large oak. I was very close to her when she climbed it; and in the forks, in the nest-shelter I had sought so long and vainly, I caught her.

The hyena had taken our trail again, and he now sat down on the ground and made hungry noises. But we did not mind, and we laughed at him when he snarled and went away through the thicket. It was the springtime, and the night noises were many and varied. As was the custom at that time of the year, there was much fighting among the animals. From the nest we could hear the squealing and neighing of wild horses, the trumpeting of elephants, and the roaring of lions. But the moon came out, and the air was warm, and we laughed and were unafraid.

I remember, next morning, that we came upon two ruffled cock-birds that fought so ardently that I went right up to them and caught them by their necks. Thus did the Swift One and I get our wedding breakfast.

"Before Adam" will be concluded in the February number.

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The Autobiography of a Child with Two Parents

I SUPPOSE it is because I taught school before I was married that I read every article I see about the duty of "the parent"(I notice these articles always speak of the parent in the singular) to cooperate with the teacher in the education of the child. I also find in the magazines many suggestive essays on the training and government of children. To read these articles one would suppose that mothers brought up their children all alone. If it were not for other articles on the management of husbands, one would not know that there were any men at all in the world, or else one would think that, though man as a husband is often trying, man as a father is always in accord with his wife.

This isn't at all the way the mothers and fathers whom I know behave in real life. Few children have any reason to believe that their parents are "one" until they are old enough to read in books about the unitedness of married people. Before this, most of them have been vividly conscious that they have two parents, two distinct wills, to deal with.

When I taught school, I felt very sure that before "the parent" could cooperate with the teacher, the parents would first have to agree with each other as to how the child should be brought up. Since I have a little girl of my own, I am even more certain on this point.

How important this subject seems to me I can show in no way more clearly than by telling the story of my life, for if I were to be asked what was the most important influence in my training, I should reply at once:

"The fact that I had two parents."

I want to say in the beginning that my father and mother lived very happily together as people go in this world. My mother was wretched when my father was away, and though I imagine he was less unhappy and even enjoyed his freedom, he was always glad enough to get back to us all. He was a good and indulgent husband, and never an indifferent one, and we children loved him dearly even when our sympathies were with mother.

The first actual instance I remember of my two parents each wanting different things of me, was when I was less than six. Mother had got me all ready to go out with her and was dressing while I sat primly on the front porch, proud as a peacock of my curls and my stiff white dress and blue ribbons.

Father came out on his way back to business. He put his hand on top of my head and rumpled my hair affectionately.

"You will muss my hair," said I, like the little Miss Prim I was. At this he burst out laughing. Then he suggested, "Let's play ball."

"Mother told me to sit here till she comes," I replied doubtfully.

"Why?" he asked.

"So's I won't get my clothes mussed," I answered seriously. Mother had taken pains to explain to me how much trouble it was to "do up" little girls' best dresses, and I understood perfectly why I must be careful; but father did not. He looked at me pityingly.

"Poor mite," he said, "you *shall* play ball, clothes or no clothes. It's all right. Get down from that chair."

I slid down obediently and soon had forgotten all about my dress and ribbons. When I was well mussed up mother put in an appearance.

"Why, Esther!" she cried, "didn't I tell you to sit still until I came? You're a sight! March right up-stairs, miss! I'll have to change your dress again, you dirty little thing!"

I began to cry.

"See here, Lillian," my father came to the rescue, "you sha'n't scold the child. It's not her fault. I *told* her to play. I'd a thousand times rather see her as she is now than as she was ten minutes ago."

"I've no doubt you would!" rapped out my exasperated mother.

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"A child ought to be dirty. It's shocking the way mothers teach their children to be vain and self-conscious. I found her smoothing her ribbons like a girl of twenty."

My mother tapped her foot.

"Go up-stairs, Esther," she told me imperiously. My father was fully launched on his subject, and said things that I have no doubt were true about vanity and affectation.

Mother listened to him with red cheeks.

"I think you're just as mean as you can be," she told him, "to get that child all dirty when you know I've got all I can jump to, to get to Edna Allen's on time—Esther, didn't I tell you to march right along up-stairs?" and, banging the door behind her, mother hustled me into fresh clothes. I recall nothing of our visit, but I remember the scene at home as if it had occurred yesterday. I thought about it gravely and turned it over in my mind. I remember, too, that at tea father asked mother teasingly if she were in a better temper, and mother replied with smiles that she was, but that all the same father was a mean thing; and father replied that all women were alike—so fussy about clothes. Then he pinched my cheek and asked me if I were going to be fussy about my clothes when I grew up, and I replied seriously, "No, I'm not," at which they both laughed.

There I had it: mother liked clean clothes, father didn't. I needn't keep my clothes clean if I didn't want to—father said so, and father was bigger than mother. I was too young to realize that half he said was in fun, to tease her. But I knew very clearly that there were two opinions in the house, two courts of appeal: Things that father said you couldn't do, mother let you, pretending not to see; things that mother forbade, father encouraged you to do, laughing right under mother's nose. I didn't of course reason it out as distinctly as all that, but what was more to the point, I realized the condition, and in various ways took advantage of it.

One immediate result of this first recognition of the two conflicting wills in our household was that we children made it difficult for mother to dress us, and were careless about our frocks once they were on. We knew father would uphold us, and so he did, unless our untidiness interfered with his plans.

But we did not stop at this. By the time I was ten, there were four of us; and each of us young imps, from the youngest to the oldest, knew and acted on the knowledge that father and mother were of two minds about what was good for us. We knew exactly which things to ask father's permission about and which mother's. For instance, if Harry wanted to go fishing or swimming, he went to father; when it was a question of parties, we asked mother if we might go. We learned early that the way to prevail against her was not to argue with her, but to get father's consent first for the thing we didn't think she would approve of, and then let him do the arguing for us. We knew too, that when he consented, he knew quite as well as we that mother wouldn't like it. On the other hand, when mother had agreed to something father did not wish us to do, she would say to him:

"I must keep my promise to the girls. You should have said sooner that you didn't want them to go"; when poor father hadn't had a chance to refuse us, and we all knew he hadn't. One of the things he has always been most punctilious about is keeping promises, so when mother said, "I promised the girls," she knew she had him.

Children learn to act on knowledge long before they are old enough to realize that they have it. We three girls learned from our cradles—you might say—to "manage" father; to take account of mood or occupation; in short, to approach him "in the right way," as women deal with men the world over. Mother would have been quite horrified had any one told her that, by example, she taught us to use father's peculiarities to accomplish our own ends. As one writes it down, it sounds very shocking, and I must make it clear that we were not undutiful children—only the ordinary American family on terms of intimacy with our father and mother. What went on in our house was only what occurs to a greater or less extent in every house in the land.

I think that in all the foregoing I have suggested one of the very worst results of having two parents—that is, the tendency of children to take the side of one parent against the other. It is impossible to prevent this as long as parents dispute openly before their children. One has opinions of one's own even at a very early age, and small people over whose head discussion wages and who have mutely taken sides, will soon begin to express their opinions in words.

Another result of father's and mother's disputing openly before us was that, imitating, we in turn disputed with and criticized one another. In our quarrels we sought the

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sympathy of whichever parent we believed most likely to agree with us. The result was that the house was broken up into two shifting camps,—sometimes father and mother against us, but more often father and some of us pitted against mother and the rest. For instance, Harry would begin:

"Mother have I got to take the girls to the candy pull to-night? Say, have I?" Father would answer for mother:

"Certainly you have, my son."

"I want to go with the fellers," poor Harry would say.

"I don't see why Harry can't go with us. Other boys take their sisters." This from me, for both Winnie and I were stickler's for propriety and liked to be "escorted" by our brother. We had got this idea from father, who was very punctilious in such matters.

"I want to go with the fellers," Harry would repeat.

"Well, why can't he go with the other boys? It's only a step, and the girls could go with the Howards as well as not," mother would argue in Harry's behalf.

"Say, father, let me off. I'll take 'em next time. The fellers——"

"Father, oughtn't Harry to go with us?"

"Mother, must I?"

"I really don't see why Harry needs to go with them."

"Harry," this from father, "you can stop arguing. I said in the beginning you were to go with the girls——"

"But I told the fellers——"

"I said you were going, and you are."

"Mother——"

"I think he's real mean! *Let* him go off with the boys if he wants to!" Winnie would contribute.

"Let him go for this once, Robert," mother would plead, but father would put an end to all discussion with a brisk:

"Harry will take his sisters to the candy pull or he will stay at home." But though it might be the end for that meal, we would fight it out at length afterward, citing mother's and father's words.

But father's and mother's small differences of opinion had more far-reaching results in my life than any I have mentioned, results that were both tragic and absurd. I should say here a word about my parents' relations to each other: Mother is a little woman who has always kept her girlish figure, and has still the laugh of a child. She had married young; and it was natural that father should always treat her as if she were a little girl, patronizing her when she expressed opinions, and saying, often right before us children, "What an unreasonable baby you are," when she worried about our health; or "Don't be silly, Lillian." Or he would put an end to her talk with a curt "Pshaw! nonsense, you don't know what you're talking about!" Though this treatment sometimes annoyed her for the moment, I know now that secretly she adored it, and that seeming little and young and appealing was one of the strongest holds she had on him. He has always worshiped her for just these things; but how were we children to reason that all out? All we saw was that father sometimes showed mother scant respect and that she seemed annoyed by it.

As I grew older, I was more and more distressed every time father and mother disagreed, so when it came, I was quite ripe for the final scene in my little serio-comic tragedy.

When I was about thirteen mother and father had a sharper dispute than usual. It began in my presence, and it was about me—the details do not matter. At last father sent me out of the room so that they could finish with greater freedom. I went out, but I stood in the hall, a frightened, trembling little creature, listening to one of the quarrels I now am sure all married people, even those who care most for each other, sometimes have. Mother and father lost sight of the original cause of the dispute and branched into other subjects. At last I heard my mother's childish voice lifted in a sob. She sounded just like Winnie, and the noise of her crying, my own mother crying just as if she were a little girl, frightened me more than anything I have heard since. Then, broken with sobs, I caught the terrible words:

"If you loved me you wouldn't say such things to me!"

"If *I* loved *you*," came my father's voice; "it's you who have shown yourself indifferent to me——"

I can remember even to-day every word they said, and I know now that they wouldn't have said any of them if they hadn't loved each other tenderly. Presently my mother burst out crying harder than ever and my father tried to stop her, telling her that the children would hear her, bidding her be quiet, saying all the things, in short, that a man says who is at his wit's end at sight of his wife's tears. And at that my anger blazed

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up against him, for my mother continued to cry. At last he went out of the room, leaving her there sobbing. I clenched my fists in anger. I longed to tell him what I thought of him for making my mother cry; at that moment I almost hated him. This scene gave me a thread on which I strung like beads various events as they passed.

My father and mother didn't love each other, that was what I thought! Each had said the other was indifferent, and each had brought forth striking proof. It must be so.

Like all children of my generation, I read a great many stories of which the heroine was a beautiful little girl who would find a way of bringing together an unloving father and mother before one could say Jack Robinson. Indeed in my story books little girls often, by their sunny, sweet presence, regenerated whole families, including grandparents and distant cousins. Such a heroine I decided to be; but somehow the opportunity never came, and I had to remain a forlorn little spectator of the silent tragedy I believed to be going on under our roof.

Now I knew why my father spoke impatiently to my mother—he didn't care for her.

Now I knew why mother forgot to do some of the things father asked her to do—she did not love him.

I was more than a spectator. I was a silent little judge as well, now on one side, now on the other.

Of course with us there was no real reason for all my heroics, as I gradually found out when I became my mother's companion, and learned from her own lips how happy she and father had always been. I suffered needlessly, but there are a great many children who have gone through what I did, chivalrous little boys who hotly take their mother's part in the small family dissensions, and who very soon go through this course of reasoning: It is wrong for me to speak sharply to mother, father says so—but father speaks sharply himself. Therefore father is wrong.

By the time I was sixteen I had outgrown the melancholy romance I had woven about mother and father. But another difficulty had already presented itself. Now, though I see it all from a different point of view, I remember vividly the mortification and anger it caused me. When I was sixteen or seventeen, old enough to be self-conscious, old enough to have boys as callers instead of playmates, father began to exercise a sort of jealous oversight of me that clashed sharply with mother's desire that I should have a good time.

For quite a while father would leave everything to mother, then suddenly he would "break out," and generally in our presence: Where had the girls been? Who had gone with them? What time did they get home? Or, who was that young fellow hanging around the house? What did he come for? How late did he stay? and the outbreak always ended up with the implication that mother knew very little about our goings-on, kept very poor watch over us, and let things be at loose ends generally. He would ask so many questions that she would get quite confused and reply helplessly that she didn't know. Yet at such times father neither looked into things thoroughly nor let mother do it for him. I have had a great many friends whose fathers behaved in much the same way, having these bursts of suspicious anxiety over their daughters at intervals, and between times paying no particular attention to what they did. Father, for instance, insisted that we should get home from parties by a quarter of eleven—this of course was when we were very young girls between sixteen and nineteen—but instead of coming for us, he always left the matter of our escort home to some neighbor, and if we were late he would be very angry, no matter how often mother told him that, as things were, we couldn't do better.

I can't help thinking that during this time, when we were at just the age at which girls have a tendency anyway to feel abused and misunderstood, we should have been saved a great many embarrassments and much unhappiness if mother and father had managed to come to some understanding as to what things we were and what things we were not to be allowed to do, and had acted as one person about it. Father never explained to mother any more than to us what was the root of his concern. If he was afraid that some ogre would run off with us, he might have spared himself the anxiety, for we girls were not so irresistibly beautiful as to be subjected to any such danger.

At the beginning of my second year in the high school—I was seventeen—I came home one night from a young people's party, accompanied by a boy I knew in school. I had let him come home with me rather to let Harry off from this duty than for any other reason. It was a pleasant autumn night, and

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we lingered a few minutes at the gate, talking about no more romantic subjects than the party and our high-school football team, which was supposed to be an especially good one.

Suddenly I heard my father's voice call, "Esther!" I said a hurried good night and went in, my face burning. It was not late, only a little after half past eleven, but father and mother usually went to bed before this. I found them both up. I heard mother's voice as I came in, saying:

"She would have come in in a minute or two, anyway!" Her cheeks were as red as mine. I stood up straight, my head high, to meet father's attack.

"Who was that?" "Where was Harry?" "Why didn't you come home earlier?" "Haven't you more self-respect than to stand around at midnight fooling with young men?" were only a few of his demands. Most of these questions mother answered as well as myself. Then father began reproaching mother for not looking after us better. At that I spoke—to my own great surprise:

"Mother looks after us a great deal more than you do, father," I said. "If you can't trust me, why don't you come after me yourself?" Then I went out of the room without waiting for father to send me, for I had said everything there was to be said as far as I was concerned; at least all that I could say aloud. What I said to myself was, "I will go away and earn my own living as soon as ever I can." I know that this seems a trivial enough scene to cause a girl to resolve to go away from home. It is true that it was by no means a fixed and constant purpose from that moment, and that other causes contributed at last to the carrying out of my resolution. Yet, as similar scenes continued to occur and I was repeatedly made uncomfortable by my parents' quarrels on my account, the childish resolve, supported by a young girl's restless desire to "do something," was insensibly strengthened.

College seemed to me the nearest open door, and, after that, teaching. Mother was not in sympathy with higher education. She wanted her girls, she said, to be *girls*; to have a gay, happy time, and then to marry young, as she had. Therefore, to get to college, we had to win father to our side; so for two years I quietly plied the arts mother had taught me, and to this day I think father believes that our going to college was his own idea.

I must say here, in fairness to my father, that he was no more strict than many parents, and had mother been of the same mind I dare say we should have grown up without feeling rebellious. It was the division—his sternness on the one hand and mother's open sympathy and silent cooperation on the other, that made the situation so poignant.

If my case were in any degree a singular one, there would be no point in writing about it. But while I was away I met a great many girls who had come to college with the idea of some day earning their own living, although there was no necessity for their doing so, and I found that a number of them wanted to stay away from home for much the same reason that I did. A great deal of the so-called unrest of young girls to-day seems to me the result, not so much of the ambition for a "career," as of the desire to live under tranquil and independent conditions. My home was by no means an unhappy one—I cannot overemphasize that fact—but I was happier when I was there only at intervals, and it is so with a great many girls. With a great many it is true, too, as it was with me, that the reason they are more tranquil away from home is not that the relations between father and mother are definitely unhappy, but that every day they are made conscious, by friction over little matters, that they have two parents.

I may say that it was the observations that I made while teaching that led me to put into words the fact that I, like so many of my little pupils, was a child with two parents. For I constantly came in contact with earnest mothers and fathers, who desired the best for their children but, like my own parents, differed radically as to what that best may be. I saw my pupils molded and formed by the clash of these ideas just as I had been.

I realize that the person who sets a problem is expected to know the answer, but this I shall not pretend to do. It is a problem that every father and mother must settle independently. Though I am not arrogant enough to suggest a remedy to other parents, I will say, though very humbly, knowing beforehand that I may fail, that I am going to do my best to keep my little girl from feeling that she is being governed by two separate people, whose ideas of what is good for her she may skilfully play off one against the other.

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The Christmas Clearing-House, Ltd.

By RUPERT HUGHES

Author of "The Whirlwind," "Col. Crockett's Cooperative Christmas," etc.

Illustrations by Arthur G. Dove

[*Though this chronicle involves some domestic details, it is our belief that, in considering events of universal importance, the world has a right to invade even the privacy of a home.*]

IT was a bright day in the latter part of November, and people were just beginning to resume their ordinary alimentary calm after Thanksgiving Day, when Mr. Skiddy's faithful, if at times fatiguing, helpmeet might have been seen approaching her devoted husband with the thrilling words:

"Beriah, it is about time to begin thinking of Christmas."

"Oh, Lord!—again?—already? If only Christmas came on the 29th of February! I've just been trying to figure out how I could stave off bankruptcy for about two months, until I can collect enough of what other people owe me, to pay part of what I owe other people."

"What luck?" inquired Mrs. Skiddy.

"Fisherman's. I find that I must borrow from six different places to secure enough to make partial payments on sixty different accounts. The main trouble is to get past January 1st without closing the store. It looks doubtful. But one thing is surer than shooting: I sha'n't have money enough to pay the butcher and the baker, to say nothing of giving away any Christmas presents. I'm still wearing last winter's overcoat, as it is."

"Not give any Christmas presents!" exclaimed Mrs. Skiddy. "Why, the man must be crazy. Of course, you'll give Christmas presents, and a lot of them, too."

"But what about the business, my dear?"

"It's none of mine," she observed. "Business or no business, we have got to give presents to everybody who gave us presents last Christmas, and to several people who have shown dangerous signs of giving us presents this Christmas."

"For instance?"

"Well, there are the—the Atterburys."

"But we didn't give them anything last year."

"No, but they gave us something, and I haven't dared to look Mrs. Atterbury in the face since. And she's been that snippy!"

"Well," sighed Beriah, "who else?"

"The Quackenbushes, for one."

"But why? Of course, they gave us that awful vase, but poor Quackenbush went bankrupt last month."

"That's so. Well, we might cut them out. But, then, there's your old crony, Gooch. You've given him a box of cigars every Christmas since the Lord knows when."

"Gooch and I have both sworn off smoking, because of hard times."

"You only say that. You'll see: bright and early Christmas morning he'll send around a box of Aaron Burr cigars to smell up my lace curtains; and if you haven't sent him a box you'll be mortified to death."

"Well, who else is there?"

"The doctor."

"I guess he'd rather I'd pay something on account than send him some useless gewgaw."

"The very fact that you can't pay his bill is all the more reason for sending him something to keep him silenced. Then there are all the relatives: especially your uncle, and my aunt—they'd rewrite their wills if we left them out; and there's the pastor, and the mail-carrier, and the boy who delivers the

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papers, and the—oh, dozens of others; and, of course, there's the cook."

"But I can't even pay her wages this month. I'll have to ask her to let it go over."

"Then you've simply got to give her a present. I can get one of those almost pretty pseudo-silk waists for $3.49. She's near-sighted and won't know the difference."

"Do you mean to say that I've got to hold up the cook's lawfully earned wages and spend them on buying her something she doesn't want—something that will make her look like a dressed-up hippopotamus?"

"That's just what I mean. Everybody does it."

"Then everybody's a fool."

"Speak for yourself, Beriah. But let's not wrangle before the children. You may as well make up your mind and give in peacefully to the inevitable. And I shall want some money in the morning, because if I shop now, the shops won't be crowded, and the prices won't be advanced yet."

He growled himself out like a vanishing thunder-storm. "Well, have your way, but I insist on one thing. I can't give you cash. You must do all your shopping at the stores where we have an account. Once they deliver the goods, they can whistle for their pay till they get it."

"All right, Beriah," said Mrs. Skiddy, masking her triumph under a sigh of resignation.

The following evening Mr. Skiddy took up his paper with the same indifference to affairs outside his own world as before. Indeed, he was not reading at all, but figuring on the margins and in the blank spaces of the openwork advertisements. That afternoon he had left his hardware shop and called on two of the money-lenders on his list. One had refused flatly to lend a penny. The other had reluctantly consented to give half the desired sum on the condition that he receive twice the legal interest and an increased security.

As the dismal Beriah sat and multiplied, subtracted, and divided, the door burst open, and Mrs. Skiddy tottered into the room and plounced into a chair. She was in an advanced condition of dishevelment, bedevilment, and aphasia. Her hair, her hat, her skirt, her features, and her temper were all askew, awry, and aglee.

"My dear," ejaculated the horrified Beriah, "you haven't been——"

"Of course not, you idiot. I've been shopping!"

"What did you get?"

"Two toes crushed, a corset steel broken, and a flounce ripped off my skirt."

"I mean what did you buy?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing!"

Then she began to cry and displayed an energy of expression amazing for one so fatigued. But it seemed to rest her, and strength finally accrued to her in such measure that she could turn on Beriah.

"It's all your fault," she sobbed.

"I'm glad to hear you say that, my dear," he murmured, "for when you commence on me, I always know that you're getting back to your normal frame of mind."

"That's right, berate me. You have a heart of flint. And you made me go to those awful stores where you have an account. And I've been gone ever since morning. And I haven't had a bite to eat. And I've worked like a dog trying to buy presents for your disgusting friends. And I've been on my feet all day—and a hundred fat women have been on my feet all day, too.

"And the only thing I saw that I'd look at a second time, I had to grab away from another woman. And just as I was going to buy it, Mrs. Deacon Tinkham grabbed it. We had a terrible scene and came near tearing it in two. But, thank heaven, I am at least a lady, so I let go and told the shop-girl I'd take it. But Mrs. Tinkham caught her eye first, and got away with it. And she pretends to be a Christian! and makes a parade of going to church regular!"

As she gasped for breath, Beriah meekly interposed: "But I thought you said that if you went early, you would avoid the rush."

"Everybody else thought the same thing. Why, the women of this town act just like harpies! And the shop-girls are so tired working overtime that they won't show you a thing, and they insult you if you speak to them. I told one of the minxes that I'd have her discharged, and she answered, 'I wish you would.' Then she began to cry, and it made me so mad that I cried. And everything is pawed over, and all the nice things are gone, and they won't send anything on approval, and they won't promise anything by a certain time, and nothing matches, and they won't mark anything, and they won't exchange anything, and the floor-walkers are

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so jostled and yanked about that you can't get at them; and if you do, they treat you like a shoplifter; and I had my pocket picked, and had one of my mock-turtle-shell combs stepped on, and——"

Once more she had to pause for breath, and her husband inanely echoed himself:

"And you didn't buy anything at all?"

"Not a thing, and I'm so tired and hungry and disappointed and discouraged, and I hate everybody and everybody hates me, and—oh, oh, oh, boohoo, hoo, hoo, hoo," etc.

Mr. Skiddy had a vague idea that just this sort of thing had happened every Christmas since he had been married. A horrible premonition seized him that it was going to happen every Christmas hereafter. He observed with a touch of cynicism:

"Well, if this is Christmas, give me Hallowe'en. Why, a few years more and it will lead to anarchy. Something has got to be done."

His prophetic strain did not interest the agitated woman, but the concluding statement brought her up standing.

"You're right," she exclaimed, dashing away the tears. "Something has got to be done. You've got to give me some cash. I saw beautiful things at the stores where you have no account, and I'm going there. Yes, I just am. No decent store would open an account anyway with a shiftless, heartless, unreliable man like you."

MRS. SKIDDY TOTTERED INTO THE ROOM.

"Oh, for heaven's sake don't begin on me," said Beriah. "I'll get you some cash if I have to rob a bank. Next Christmas I'll be in my grave or the penitentiary, if I'm lucky."

Then dinner was announced. But Beriah ate little, and went to bed early.

Now, Beriah E. Skiddy had one of those night-blooming brains that enable certain men to wake up at a certain hour. They save the wear and tear on an alarm-clock by transferring it to their own nervous systems. Beriah's brain had also the not uncommon faculty of digestion during sleep. He would often go to bed with his thoughts tangled into a Gordian knot, and wake up with them neatly assembled into a kinkless skein.

Such was the case on this henceforth historical morning — *dies candidissimo calculo notandus*. Mr. Skiddy rose from his slumbers as a giant leaps laughing from his couch. He slid into his cold tub without the usual cautious lingering on the brink. Then he leaped out again, like Archimedes in the Fourth Reader, howling:

"Eureka! Eureka! I have found it, I have found it."

Mrs. Skiddy rushed to the bathroom door, calling, "Found what? The soap?"

"No, the solution of the problem of the ages!"

"Well, get back in there! I guess the solution will keep," was her sole reply as she slammed the door on his best foot, which was foremost.

Later he emerged, clothed in his right garments. He walked with a slight limp, but his enthusiasm was unabated. He even forbore to swear when, in his excitement, he sent a small geyser of orange juice into his left eye. These details may seem trivial, but nothing concerning an event destined to have such momentous consequences should be overlooked. Beriah began expansively:

"Talk about Sir Humphry Davy and Eli Whitney, and Dr. Lister, and the dentist who invented anesthetics, and the other so-called benefactors of mankind—why, I've got 'em all skinned to death."

"How can you expect the children to learn to speak English good, when their pa uses such language?" said Mrs. Skiddy with great dignity.

"Oh, hang the children!"

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"I suppose you'd just as lief; if it would save you buying a few Christmas presents."

"That's my very idea: a Christmas in which the presents will be conspicuous by their absence. Think of it!"

"There you go again. It's getting to be a monomania. On your way to the office you'd better stop in at the doctor's and see if he can't give you something for it."

He left the table in a huff, slammed his hat on his head, and discreetly remaining deaf to his wife's reminder that she needed cash, went to his office—without stopping at the doctor's. At his office his epoch-making project was received with even more scorn than at home. At the luncheon hour he unfolded it at the club, and was laughed out of the reading-room. But Beriah Skiddy was one of those geniuses who draw new strength from ridicule, and he resolved to prove his point if it wrecked his business, his home, his health, and his morals.

That evening he found, somehow, strength enough to face his wife with an oration which he had carefully rehearsed and which he delivered at such speed that she found no chance to interrupt:

"Belinda, I have sworn a solemn oath that I will not spend one cent this year for Christmas presents, except enough to buy the children some toys and some candy. They have a right to expect just so many useless playthings and so much stomach-ache every Christmas, and I wouldn't disappoint them. But, as for the grown-ups, everybody would be happier and healthier and better if Christmas presents had never been heard of. I consider that the Christmas present has done more to ruin human character, to provoke blasphemy, and to cultivate brotherly hate than the race-track, the gambling-hell, and the demon rum all combined.

"I usually allow you to make up my mind for me, but this time I have decided to save you the trouble. Don't argue. It will be quite useless. I only wish you to know that I have perfected a scheme for mitigating the increasing and intolerable evils of the so-called Yule-tide. This man whom you have been mistreating as a husband, is the very man the world had been sitting up nights and waiting for. Millions of anxious and careworn parents have had one ear to the ground waiting for the tread of these very feet."

Mrs. Skiddy listened in bewilderment to his mathematics and philosophy, and heard him through, even to his glowing peroration:

"I trust I am not conceited in saying that I shall, at one bound, place myself among the classics in social economics. I shall make myself ten times as popular as Carnegie, and at no expense. Skibo won't be in it with Schenectady."

Then his wife broke out in rapture:

"Oh, Beriah, does it mean that I shall not have to spend three weeks of agony trying to make out lists of people I must give presents to? and decide what I must give them? then finding that everything nice is not to be had or costs too much? and then I have to take something else that costs still more? and I can just stay home and rest in comfort? and take care of the house? and needn't neglect the children—or scold them because I'm worn out; and you—I—we—does it mean that, Beriah, darling?"

Beriah answered with gentle tolerance:

"Your syntax is somewhat twisted, my dear, but your intuition is still in good working order. Christmas—when I get through with it—will be Christmas pure and simple, instead of a month of football tactics followed by a month of remorse."

And peace, like a homing dove, brooded over the poor but proud ménage of Skiddy.

The next morning's Schenectady papers contained the usual advertisements of this time of year, including such a gem of unconscious irony as this:

"THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS WORRY.
"WHAT TO GIVE. A SUGGESTION.

"Again we are close upon the most delightful time of the year, Christmas! the time when the old renew their youth—when good-will to all reigns supreme—when mankind realizes in the fullest sense how much more blessed it is to give than to receive.

"Christmas is an annual event and one of the happiest of the entire year, and what better occasion could you ask for on which to make the entire household genuinely happy by the presentation of a 'Parkin Folding Piano'? In particular we would direct your attention to the 'Parkin Pocket Grand,' the smallest grand piano on the market. Call and learn the delightfully easy terms under which it can be bought ($5 down and $5 a month for twelve years), and we believe that what has hitherto seemed beyond your reach, will this year become an established fact, namely, a piano in your home."

There were the usual suggestions: "Give your friend a house and lot for Christmas." "Give your daughter a self-steering automobile, only $5,000." "Put a Shetland

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"WE HAD A TERRIBLE SCENE AND CAME NEAR TEARING IT IN TWO."

pony in your son's sock." "Don't waste money on toys. Buy useful presents. Your children will appreciate the gifts we offer: shoes, snow-shovels, lawn-mowers, sewing-machines, and cooking-ranges. Give your son a new ax and he will love to split the wood. As the poet has sung:

"'Sweet Yule-tide is with us, O joy, O joy!
It means such a good time for the girls and the boys.'"

"Diamonds on credit. No payment down. No references or security required." "A complete set of the works of Dean Swift or the Rev. Laurence Sterne will make a nice gift for Grandma or your pastor." "Cigar-boxes with pretty pictures." "Santa Claus's headquarters are at Gougem & Squeezem's Millinery Emporium." "Santa Claus's headquarters are at John Judel's Fur and Harness Shop." "Santa Claus's headquarters are at Solomon Simpson's Sign of the Three Gold Balls." "The Ideal Christmas gift is a five-cent package of Gogetta Biscuit." "To make the children happy Xmas morn, put in their little stockings a box of Bunco-wheato." "My Papa wears Choker's Laundry-proof Collars. Made of circus-tent canvas. A dandy Xmas gift." "When tired out with Xmas shopping, drink a glass of Morpho-Coca-Acetanilid and see what happens."

These and other proclamations swelled the pages and forced the reading-matter into small corners and chinks. The whole world was scratching its great round head in the effort to think of suitable gifts for the wretches on its list. People hoped against hope for something new, knowing that they would fall back on the same old eternal silver pencils, silver tooth-brushes, silver ink-stands, and picture-padded gift-books. It was presents, presents everywhere, and not one fit to give!

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But of all the alluring advertisements there was none that so stirred the whole fabric of Schenectady as this:

"Christmas comes but once a year,
Then throws the whole world out of gear."

New York City spent **$20,000,000** on Christmas presents last season; Schenectady in proportion.

Of the presents bought with this money 99.44 per cent. were absolutely useless to the recipient.

They cost the giver money he couldn't afford, they were secretly begrudged, and they gave the recipient as much pain as they gave the giver.

The recipient in return had caused the giver additional pain by giving the giver something equally useless to him and equally ill afforded.

The Problem of the Ages solved at last.

A way has been finally discovered by Beriah E. Skiddy (proprietor of Schenectady's most enterprising Hardware Palace—a full line of agricultural implements always on hand—see special adv't elsewhere).

B. E. Skiddy guarantees to show you:

1. A way to preserve the spirit of good-will toward man.
2. To remember your friends.
3. To be remembered by your friends.
4. To save yourself weeks of worry.
5. To save yourself ninety-five per cent. of your investment.

Send stamp for circular.

B. E. SKIDDY.

The day after the publication of this advertisement, Mr. Skiddy's usually quiet hardware magazine was inundated with men, women, children, and messenger-boys asking for circulars. The mail-carrier refused to deliver the mail, and Skiddy's handsome red truck had to be sent to the post-office.

At the club, where Mr. Skiddy had been treated with a ridicule indelicate even for Schenectady, he was now greeted with respect, and an inquisitiveness approaching ovation. He advised every one to send for a circular, but finally consented to elucidate his scheme to a group of anxious friends.

"The best way to explain anything is in a tabular form," he said. "I have drawn up my plan as a sort of proposition in geometry. I'll read it to you."

"Demonstration of the cruel and hideous results of an unregulated spirit of Christmas altruism:

"A is a man who has a passionate longing for a plush photograph album that costs $5. He feels that he can't afford it, but at Christmas time buys one and gives it to B.

"B hates plush photograph albums, and has eleven of them in his attic. He wants a portfolio of C. D. Gibson's drawings. He feels that he can't afford the $5, but in a splurge of Christmas generosity buys a portfolio and gives it to C.

"C is a permanent bachelor who abominates Gibson girls and has had a set of them forced on him every Christmas for five years. He longs vainly for a green bronze inkstand, but self-sacrificingly buys one as a gift for D.

"D uses a typewriter exclusively and has already thrown thirteen inkstands at the cats. He is a profound smoker, and he and his cigars are wasting away for lack of a $5 humidor. So he buys one and gives it to A, who doesn't smoke, and who goes on pining for plush.

"Thus the circle is complete. Each man has spent $5 that he can't afford, has denied himself something he wants, and received something he hates.

"As a result, $20 has gone to the—the dealers, who are the only ones satisfied. Multiply this by the total population of Christendom and you get a hint of the appalling aggregate of wastefulness and misery.

"If, however, each of the four men had subscribed to Skiddy's Christmas Clearing-House, Ltd., he would have saved his money, and felt so well that he would have bought what he wanted. Then everybody, dealers included, could have been happy, and the world's supply of visible suffering and audible profanity restricted. Q. E. D."

When Skiddy had finished reading, there was a long silence, which was finally broken by Mr. Lemuel Tubby, one of Schenectady's most cultured sign-painters.

"I'd be mighty glad to see you fetch on your millennium, Beriah," said Mr. Tubby. "I'm dead ag'in these stores. Christmas don't do my business any good, and I might as well take a long siesta when shopping-time begins. I can't even collect my bills, and my family fairly goes out of their minds buying things. But I don't understand just how you cal'late to rescue the perishing."

Mr. Skiddy flushed with missionary ardor, and answered:

"I'll soon show you. This is the A B C of it: You and Abe Juckett there are old friends. He sells you groceries, you paint his signs. Each of you wants to hold the other's trade, so each of you figures on spending $10 on the other. You hate to spend the money; you can't afford the time to go shopping. It gives you a headache to decide what to buy him, and it gives you a bilious attack when you see what he's bought you.

"The ideal way would be a simple Christmas card from each to the other, wouldn't it?

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Well, that's my scheme in a nutshell. Each of you sends his check to my Clearing-House. I send you each a kind of a noncommittal Merry Christmas card, and return each of you his money—less a small per cent. for my labor.

"Now, of course, it gets more complicated as it broadens out, but the principle's the same. Suppose, Lemuel—supposing you make out your list of the Christmas presents you've simply got to give, and the sums you've simply got to spend. Supposing it reads something like this:

"Abe Juckett, $10; John Yarrick, $4; William Crouch, $6; Jacob Mishler, $5; Milt Bogle, $5; Clarence Finfer, $10; Constantine Pegram, $5; Augustus Goggin, $7. Total, $52.

"Now I know you well enough, Lem, to say that you'd rather have that $52 in the bank than squander it on these fellows. In fact, you owe me just about $52 for brushes and things you've bought at my place. Now I happen to owe Pegram $28, Goggin $16, and Mishler $8, so that if you paid me that $52, it would square one of your honest debts and three of mine, and five people would feel better.

"Carry it a little farther; each of the men on your list makes out one of his own. Bogle, for instance, and Finfer.

"*Bogle's List:* Lem Tubby, $10; A. Juckett, $8; J. Yarrick, $4; W. Crouch, $3; J. Mishler, $2; Const. Pegram, $5; A. Goggin, $5; C. Finfer, $8. Total, $45.

"*Finfer's List:* Tubby, $8; Juckett, $5; Yarrick, $5; Crouch, $10; Mishler, $5; Pegram, $10; Goggin, $8; Lou Hannwacker, $5. Total, $56."

The group of men leaned forward in excitement at their prospective gifts.

Mr. Bogle was angry. "Why do you make me out stingier than either of the others?" he said. "Everybody knows I'm as liberal as the next one, especially Finfer."

Mr. Skiddy looked pained. "How many great enterprises have been wrecked by jealousy! These lists are purely imaginary and no hard feelings intended."

"Go on," growled Bogle; "but I hate to be the goat all the time."

"That's nature's fault, not ours," said Mr. Finfer.

"Gentlemen, please be gentlemen. Now—to resume—you note that these imaginary lists differ slightly, as they would in reality, but the differences should not cause ill-feeling. Yet, in real life, they would. And that's what militates against brotherly love. In my Clearing-House all these petty differences would be smothered in oblivion.

"Each subscriber pays me $2 as a sort of initiation fee; sends me his list and a check to cover the amount. Then when the lists are complete, I send each person a beautifully embossed card like this:

SKIDDY'S CHRISTMAS CLEARING-HOUSE, LTD.
EXTENDS
ITS BEST WISHES FOR A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO

M.....

AND BEGS TO INFORM HIM
THAT A CHECK HAS BEEN DEPOSITED HERE
SUFFICIENT TO BUY HIM
A HANDSOME AND USEFUL GIFT
AS A REMEMBRANCE OF

M.....

HE SENT A SMALL GEYSER OF ORANGE JUICE INTO HIS LEFT EYE.

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"After these cards are sent out we balance up, and return to each subscriber his check minus our five per cent. You get back ninety-five per cent of your investment and save all the worry. And everybody gets the same language: 'A Handsome and Useful Gift.' No discrimination, no hard feelings.

"Ain't it great? Of course, it's based on the principle of bank clearing-houses. They used to cart bags of coin all over town every which way, crisscrossing each other, mixing up books, causing hard feelings, and risking robbery; but now it's all done with pen and ink at the clearing-house. I've simply applied the same idea to the Christmas trade. Ain't it just what the world has been hankering after, eh?"

Milt Bogle, however, was still unappeased. "Look here, Skiddy," he said. "You got me down as spending $8 on Finfer, and him overlookin' me entirely. That's about what would happen, but what I want to know is: what becomes of my $8? Does Finfer get it? or do you?"

Mr. Skiddy's face was luminous with benevolence as he exclaimed:

"There you have touched on one of the greatest moral benefits of the institution. Next to the fear that you will spend money on somebody who won't spend any on you, the worst feature of the Christmas agitation is the fear that you will forget somebody who will remember you. There is no deeper humiliation or chagrin than that which covers a person on Christmas morning when he or she finds a nice little gift from somebody he or she has completely overlooked. It's too late to retaliate; to apologize is to add insult to insult. By next Christmas either or both may be dead or bitter enemies. There is nothing to do but sit still and look mortified. Half the presents we buy are bought merely from a fear that somebody else will buy something for us.

THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN SCHENECTADY.

"But the Christmas Clearing-House avoids all that. If you include Finfer in your list and Finfer doesn't include you, we simply return your check minus the five per cent., and say nothing about it to Finfer. He never knows the difference, and you save your friend from confusion, while you can revel in the secret pride that you thought of him. Oh, I tell you, when I get this town thoroughly Skiddyfied, Christmas will be a season of pleasure.

"As things are now, the only place where there is any real Christmas spirit is in the magazines, and they're all published a month or two ahead, and filled full of Yule-tide stuff written by starving authors in hot weather when their imaginations are unfettered."

The conference in the corner broke up as Mr. Hannwacker remarked: "It looks good on paper, but I guess it wouldn't pan out. Besides, where's our security that we'll get our money back?"

The great inventor flushed at the insinuation. "If the name of Beriah E. Skiddy isn't guaranty enough, I can only say that I shall secure an auditing committee of representative citizens, and that the bank will hold your checks in trust."

Constantine Pegram nodded. "Oh, you're all right, Skiddy, but I'm afraid you've bit off more'n you can chaw."

"All right," said Mr. Skiddy, "I give you your chance. If you don't think this fills a long-felt want, go look at the scenes in the shops, and listen to your wives to-night. Then let me know to-morrow."

That night every member of the group heard just such a tale of woe as Mrs. Skiddy had poured out to her husband some days before. In each house there was a stern demand for cash, cash—more cash.

The next noon Skiddy was surrounded by men eager to join his scheme, or any scheme that would protect their funds from home

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consumption. In a few minutes he had them all enrolled as charter members. Four or five leading personages of Schenectady's swaggerdom were also enlisted as patrons and patronesses. This gave the plan social prestige, and snobs and wise folk of all degrees began to pour in.

A marvelous change was wrought at once in the city's streets and marts of trade. The mad crowds vanished from the streets. The battle and the shouting died. One did not see everywhere haggard and tottering shop-folk driven to distraction by the hubbub and the long hours. One did not see worried people wandering everywhere in search of suitable gifts and yielding to a sodden despair that finally buys the article first contemned. One did not see homes made infernal by demands for more money, money, money. In the streets one did not see young messenger-boys staggering at all hours under all manner of bundles. One did not see delivery-wagon men beating jaded and dying horses at midnight.

The Schenectady shopkeepers stood about in a daze selling only the ordinary staples at a fair profit to the ordinary trade. They were enraged at their failure to sell the great stock laid in for the Christmas market. They talked of ruin, and would have lynched Mr. Skiddy if the citizens had not voted him a body-guard. Then Mr. Skiddy issued an address:

"The Christmas Clearing-House is not the enemy, but the friend, of the good tradespeople of our fair city. The situation, at present disturbing in its appearance, will prove to be really a guaranty of prosperity. Schenectady people have only so much money to spend. Unproductive consumption is good for nobody. Our people, instead of squandering more than they can afford on useless gifts for others, will feel so prosperous after Christmas that they will keep up a steadier demand than ever for the real comforts and luxuries."

And so it proved.

On Christmas eve in other cities belated shoppers fought for the last remnants, and in the homes dejected wretches moped like paupers marooned among bundles. They took surreptitious peeps at the gifts that had arrived, and felt doubly dismal to think what they had given away, and what received.

But, in Schenectady, Christmas eve found a fresh and smiling people whose consciences were clear and whose friends were sanely remembered. They stayed at home and trimmed trees and filled stockings for their children.

The next morning at their breakfast-tables they found neat packs of cards from the Clearing-House. They read the names of friends who had cherished them in memory, and they were not shamed by finding cards from people they had forgotten. They knew that their own cards were being read at other breakfast-tables. And then, most luxurious thought of all, they realized that this interchange of affectionate greetings had cost them next to nothing.

And so, becoming as children, they romped with the children: for Christmas is a festival decreed in the name of a Child. It belongs to the children, and should be made a day of return to childhood of heart, instead of the climax of an orgy of dishonest extravagance, unavailing fatigue, false altruism, and hypocritic zeal.

It is needless to say that the Clearing-House has become a permanent institution in Schenectady. Mr. Skiddy hopes to add some new features to it this Christmas. He declines to publish his financial benefits, but that they were not inconsiderable we may judge from the fact that he has taken the store next door to his Hardware Palace, and will enlarge his stock. Furthermore, Mrs. Skiddy's new hats and gowns have attracted much attention even among the beauty and chivalry of Schenectady. And her visiting-cards now read: Mrs. B. Ethelred Skyddie.

Mr. Skiddy has been offered large sums to organize similar clearing-houses in several other cities. Indeed, there was so much fear that he would be lured away from Schenectady that he was nominated for mayor on the Democratic ticket, and after an exciting canvass was nearly elected.

It is stated that the next edition of a prominent dictionary will contain the word "skiddify: (1) to pacify, as a mob; (2) to ameliorate, as financial stringency; (3) to reform, as a decadent institution." A rumor has also been abroad that the next award of the Nobel prize for the propagation of peace will be sent to the most popular man in Schenectady. Mr. Skiddy wears his laurels modestly. His ambition has been stirred, however, and while continuing to do all in his power to spread the gospel of a Painless Christmas, he is now also experimenting in the further effort to invent a Noiseless and Non-Inflammable Fourth of July.

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LITTLE STORIES OF REAL LIFE

A Reluctant Raleigh

By Grace MacGowan Cooke

"GWINE to the circus, Miss Laury?" inquired old Gaffin Himes when the girl set down his third cup of coffee. "Thank ye, I wouldn't choose none—cow butter's good enough for me," as she presented the plum marmalade.

"Yes, sir, Mr. Tittle he ast my company to the circus," responded Laurenella, blushingly conscious that she had secured the most desired beau in Hepzibah. Breason Tittle clerked in the dry-goods department of Frazee's store.

"Miss Laury shore must have a good holt on Brease Tittle," confided one farmer farther down the table to another. "Ef he's a-gwine to give up fifty cents for to take her to the show, he mought even be expected to go furder."

Tittle's parsimony was notorious, and the remark raised a laugh that Laurenella, returning from the kitchen with a plate of hot biscuit, heard.

"What do you-all gentlemen find so funny?" she asked, smiling. "Tell me, so I can laugh too."

The entrance of the person under discussion put an end to her inquiries. Long of body and arm, with short, bandy legs, and protruding eyes, Tittle came in with the air of a conqueror, rolling his round head between shoulders that seemed perpetually shrugged.

Laurenella blushed and fluttered piteously as she set a chair for the newcomer and brought to his notice the fried chicken; cornpone with the print of her mother's fingers upon its brown top; honey served in little pewter-lidded glass pitchers, like molasses; slices of cucumber floating, discolored and almost transparent, in vinegar like aqua-fortis, and other items that go to make up the Southern mountain village dinner.

Down at the end of the table sat a tall, fine-looking mountain boy who had come into town that morning. His blue-black curls were yet shining from the application of a wet brush; his tanned cheeks showed the flush of perfect health; his large-pupiled, deep blue eyes had a child's clear candor and a man's vigorous purposefulness, but now they were fixed persistently upon his plate. He had tramped down from Big Turkey Track Mountain with a heart full of bliss, because of course Laurenella Luster was going to the circus with him. For only six months had the Widow Luster kept the hotel at Hepzibah, and it was hardly to be supposed that in that length of time Laurenella had forgotten her mountain lover. His people do not write many letters; but he felt sure she knew that he was getting ready to come and ask her mother for her. His one communication had been to tell her that he had cleared, fenced, and turned twenty acres of corn-land. On it the green blades were waving now, twice high enough to shade the traditional jug. The crop would be bountiful. And Laurenella—his little Laury—was going to the circus with Breason Tittle!

His somber eyes lifted and sent a flash of blue fire down at the pair, where she hurried from kitchen to table in uneasy haste to see that the Adonis was properly served. The sight of her eager efforts to please, and the complacency with which they were received, made speech a necessity.

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"I hearn a rain-crow this mornin', as I come down the mounting," he remarked suddenly. "I believe we're a-gwine to have fallin' weather."

"I reckon a show is shore to bring rain," suggested Archelaus Stutts, who was eating pie in large, sincere bites, across the table from Tittle. "I hain't never yit seed it fail to rain of a show day, an' enjurin' court week. Somethin' in good clothes spread out that-a-way jest draws the worter down outen the clouds, I reckon."

"If it rains, I shall not attend," announced Tittle, banging the salt-shaker upon the table to loosen its contents. Laurenella paled and caught her breath with a small gasp. She had a new pair of little, low-cut tan shoes, a white dress that she had sat up till ten o'clock the night before to finish, and a shirred white lawn hat. She had never contemplated the possibility of her escort's failing her.

"Well, hit's shore to rain," struck in the deep voice of the mountain boy from the end of the table. "But I didn't know that town folks was likely to give up goin' on that account—much less when they'd invited the company of ladies."

Tittle fixed an angry, bulging eye upon the boy. "Did you mean me, sir?" he inquired as the other went no further.

"I reckon I did," said the tall fellow quietly, rising. Nobody knew what it cost him to relinquish Laurenella to another; but if this fellow had asked her, and she wished to go with him, what could a loyal lover do but see that he kept his word?

Tittle got his breath audibly. He eyed the new man in a way that should have disposed of the matter. But Irby Rountree was six feet tall, and his tussle with the twenty-acre field had trained to the last shade of perfection muscles already hard. So Tittle contented himself with severe generalities.

"If anybody is fool enough to want to wade through mud and rain to a circus, they can do so without my assistance," he snorted.

Every knife and fork was laid down. Young Rountree had unostentatiously approached Tittle, and all eyes were on the three.

"Hush, Irby," pleaded Laurenella tremulously; "don't you pick a fuss. Mr. Tittle, Irby don't exactly understand. I—I guess —mebbe I said——"

Tears overflowed her brown eyes, and sobs that she tried to strangle cut short her speech.

Irby's flashing glance mutely demanded the decent part of Tittle. When the fellow still offered nothing, the mountain boy growled:

"If you wasn't in Mrs. Luster's dining-room, I'd jerk ye out of that chair an' make ye answer as near like a man as ye could."

"Oh, I'll take Miss Luster to the circus—if she insists—and if you insist—and if the whole town is going to turn to and insist," sneered Tittle, as one or two men at the table openly smiled, or muttered their opinion of his position.

"You gentlemen just hush!" cried poor Laurenella, finding voice at last. "Nobody is gwine to be *made* to take me anywheres—an' I p'intedly will not speak to the one of you that fusses, if——"

She caught up a plate and hurried to the kitchen, ostensibly for a fresh supply of corn-bread. Her departure seemed to relieve young Rountree of some constraint. Resting a hand upon the table, he bent down over Tittle and said in a lowered, confidential tone:

"You air shore about the po'rest specimen that calls itse'f a man that I've looked at lately. You hain't fitten for Laury to wipe her feet on. But ef you've done ast her to go to the show, and she's dependin' on you to take her, you speak up like a man, when she comes back. Ast her ag'in—an' ast her out loud, befo' all these hyer gentlemen what has done heard you go back on her. I'm gwine stand right hyer an' listen to see 'at you do it proper."

Tittle nodded with his mouth full, an expression of acute anxiety on his face.

But Irby's simple plan was frustrated. Mrs. Luster's voice called him to the kitchen, where she detained him for a few moments, asking about the folks back home on Big Turkey Track; and when the young champion returned to the dining-room, his unworthy rival had departed.

The mountain boy helped his sweetheart to clear the table. Questioned as to Tittle's behavior while he was out of the room, Laurenella laughed and replied evasively. Apparently the hurt had not gone deep, or perhaps the things Irby kept whispering over their work wiped out all memory of the recent humiliation. At some point in their conversation the Widow Luster was called in; and after Laurenella had put on the white

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dress and tan shoes, pinned the big white hat in place, and taken the fan and pocket handkerchief provided for the occasion, all three went into the next room, where sat Uncle Billy Prindle, a superannuated preacher, who was one of the regular boarders.

"Gwine to the circus?" he said, as the smiling youthful pair entered. "Well, young folks will be young folks; an' I reckon they's a-many a thing to be l'arnt from the critters and varmints these hyer shows packs about with 'em. I p'intedly did want to look at that there 'Behemoth of Scripter' that I seen in the show picters. Looks like hit could draw up Jordan—or any other middle-sized stream."

When, fifteen minutes later, the two stepped with light hearts to the front porch, they found the rain coming down, as it does in the mountains, with the vigor of a personal attack. The moment it abated they set forth.

BOUND FOR THE CIRCUS.

Irby lifted his slim sweetheart over the worst places, the two laughing together at the difficulties in the way of all bound for the circus. The boy proudly bought reserved seats, in next to the front row, into which they settled themselves. Presently they spied Breason Tittle delivering up his ticket at the canvas doorway and making all sail in their direction.

"You reckon he's got the brass to come and plank hisse'f down 'tother side o' you?" asked Irby, the red mounting warmly in his dark cheek.

"No—he ain't gwine do no sich," hurried Laurenella pacifically. But she knew Tittle well enough to beckon to a friend and urge, "You set right down hyer by us, Tennie—you and Bardo. We can see fine hyer."

Mr. Breason Tittle paused before the small pen containing the reserved seats, that he might select his position at becoming leisure. His glance traveled over the fashion and elegance of Hepzibah as there arrayed, and it did not take him long to decide that Laurenella was both the best-looking and the best-dressed girl in that company. He was troubled with no regrets that he had not brought her, for was he not fifty cents to the good on that trade? And he could attach himself to her now, enjoy her society, and bask in the glory of talking to the prettiest girl in the party, free of all expense and responsibility. Seeing the seat beside her occupied by a large, florid young woman in a very tight duck suit, he made for the one directly in front of and below Laurenella. Bowing in his most impressive manner, he sat down, carefully parting the tails of his Prince Albert coat, a garment that he wore to funerals, weddings, and upon such grand occasions as the present. To his first call upon a young lady the parade of this coat usually lent a solemn splendor; later, he would pursue the stricken deer in lesser panoply.

After the country fashion, the audience had assembled early. In the ring were only the men scattering and spreading sawdust, and a beruffled clown, shrewd-eyed behind his paint, ordering them about with an exaggerated ringmaster's manner, looking meantime for pegs upon which to hang local gibes. The figure of Breason Tittle, twisted sidewise to talk to Laurenella, could not fail to attract his trained attention. As the few sad-eyed beasts and the fagged men and women came in for the "grand entry," Tittle addressed himself to the performance; but the clown still glanced to where Irby Rountree pursued an enterprise of his own, despite remonstrances from the girl at his side.

Some secret bliss was painting Laurenella's cheeks a deeper hue, and lending a more commanding glance to the lad's falcon eyes. "You, Tennie!" she whispered as the girl on her right bent forward and offered assistance to Rountree. "I declare I'll never speak to you again if you don't quit. I think you and Irby are just scandalous!"

Some portion of this reaching Tittle's ears,

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he was encouraged to turn and tell Laurenella that she closely resembled a lady he had met in Baltimore. The lady in Baltimore, to which city the clerk had once gone to buy goods, was his utmost reach of compliment, and Laurenella knew it. "You, Miss Luster, and you only, of all here present, look fresh as though you had just stepped out of a bandbox," he said laboriously. "How did you ever come acrost the flat without gettin' muddy like the rest of us?"

Here Tennie choked so with laughter that she had to be admonished by her escort; and the clown, catching a significant look from Irby Rountree's eye, accompanied by a gesture toward Tittle, called out in the high, nasal whine of the ring:

"Aw, you didn't bring her! Let the feller 'at put up the money have a chance to talk to 'is girl!"

A concerted guffaw told the jester that he had guessed right.

Tittle breathed hard and looked about him fiercely. But fighting the laughter of a crowd is like fighting bees with bare hands—if one would be comfortable there must be either rubber gloves or flight. Why had he not himself brought Laurenella? He was conscious of a twinge of jealousy as he turned far enough to see her hand dropped to the seat between herself and Irby, and held strongly in the clasp of the tall fellow. He would soon settle that; he would, for once, open heart and purse; and his small, mean soul warmed to the thought of actually preempting the beautiful young creature for his own. He lost interest in what was transpiring upon the ropes above the ring. Even the clown's voice failed to reach him. He was looking at Laurenella, from the big white lawn hat to the clean tan shoes. How very clean they were!

"It appears to me, Miss Laury, that you must be a fairy, and fly through the air, to keep dry-shod like that," he said to the girl. "It reminds me of a piece in history about a gentleman that throwed down his coat for the queen to walk over."

The clown, edging close, listened intently. He seemed to revolve some jest in his mind, but when his lips finally parted it was only to yell "Rubber neck! Rubber neck!" in a gadfly falsetto which penetrated even Tittle's preoccupation. Some small boys near at hand took up the refrain, and one or two varied it by "Rubber shoes!"

Tittle rose with great stateliness. "I—ah—will see you later at your own home, Miss Laury," he said with deliberate significance.

"Down in front! Down in front!" came the shouts from those behind him whose view he was cutting off.

"These persons are very disagreeable," he went on, with placid egotism. "I will call upon you this evening, Miss Laury, and I have something to ask you."

"Want to ask the lady 'bout Sir Walter Raleigh throwing down his cloak for Queen Elizabeth to walk on—do you?" shrilled the clown. "Want to ask her how come the mud on your coat-tails?"

Tittle turned one despairing glance upon the back breadths of the cherished Prince Albert; then he knew why Laurenella's shoes were as clean as when she had lifted them from the box that morning. Then he understood the whispers and remonstrances that had gone on behind him. Those yellow shoes had been wiped clean upon the sacred folds of black diagonal, which he had parted and laid out carefully.

"I thort I was settin' down in front of a lady, Miss Luster. Now I see—" he began in fury. The bareback rider in the ring had stopped to adjust his shoe; the clown bent, hands on knees, chalk-white brow wrinkled, and vermilioned mouth drawn to the round O of astonishment, staring at the trio.

"Hold on thar, Brease Tittle," said the mountain boy, rising in his seat—and nobody told him to sit down because he was obstructing the view—"hold on thar. This lady"—he put a stress upon the word—"hain't Miss Luster. She's Miz Irby Rountree. I had occasion to tell you this morning that you wasn't fit fer her to wipe her feet on——"

(The clown felt that he could scarcely better this, so he contented himself with pointing at the young people and emitting a sharp squeak. The red-faced girl beside Laurenella was rocking in ecstasies of mirth. The little bride vainly twitched at the sleeve of her lord and master to make him sit down. Yet she plainly had a pride in her new champion. Everybody in the tent was looking and listening.)

"I said you wasn't fit for her to wipe her shoes on. But hit chanced that her feet was muddy, and you was the nighest thing at hand," the mountain boy pursued with dancing eyes; "so I took them streamin' banners o' glory 'at you wear fer coat-tails, an' wiped

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her shoes with 'em. Ye ort"—a chuckle broke his voice—"ye ort to feel proud. Hit's the nighest you'll ever be to speaking terms with my wife."

A concerted roar from the benches drowned further speech. Tittle's lips were seen to move; then he turned and hurried toward the entrance, followed by the laughter of the crowd, above which the clown's keen pipe made itself heard:

"Look at 'im, ladies and gentlemen; view him well, and hold up your innocent little ones to gaze upon him—the only tame Sir Walter Raleigh in captivity! You may never see another."

The Riper Years

By Juliet Wilbor Tompkins

MAIDA had been home an hour before the subject was broached. Her mother, following her nervously from room to room, could not tell whether it was in her mind or not; she was gay, alert, a little boyish, just as she always was on her yearly return from college; interested in the new dining-room wall-paper and the private bathroom that was her special surprise; brief and uncommunicative about the details of her graduation but eloquent over the tennis finals—to all appearances as unreproachful and friendly as her letters had shown her. Mrs. Hamilton herself flushed pink at every pause, absently repeated her questions, and listened to Maida's talk with wide, troubled eyes and a fixed smile; the tenderness of her frequent "Yes, dear!" was very close to tears.

The photograph on her dressing-table finally brought them to it. Maida picked it up and looked with smiling inscrutability at the solemn, kindly, middle-aged face.

"Well?" she said.

It came out in a torrent, all that Mrs. Hamilton had been rehearsing during the uneasy days of expectation.

"You know, dear, I won't do it for one moment if it is in any way distasteful to you. I wrote you that, and the Judge understands it perfectly. Your letters were lovely, Maida—they might so easily have been a little unkind, and, indeed, I should have understood it. To a girl of your age it might seem rather—shocking, perhaps; or ridiculous. I want you to be frank with me, my dear girl. I shall never consciously do anything that would spoil your home for you." And two tears ran suddenly down the smooth, delicate little face. Maida, always embarrassed before emotion, kept her eyes on the photograph.

"Why, mother, I have no objection," she said cheerfully. "Judge Reynolds is a bully old chap—I shall like having him about the house, if you don't mind him." Her eyes met her mother's in a fleeting glance. "I'm not sentimental, you know; I shouldn't want any one—that way—myself. But if you do—well, then, I'm jolly glad you've got it." She put the picture down and gave her mother's shoulder a furtive pat, which was as near as she ever willingly came to a caress. "He's a fine man; I respect him a lot," she added.

Happy relief set Mrs. Hamilton blooming.

"Oh, yes, Maida, he is a remarkable man. In a bigger place, with wider opportunities, he would be very famous. As it is, the whole county comes to him for his opinion. And he's so courageous, Maida! Never afraid to say exactly what he believes. Why, a big corporation once tried—" Her earnest voice faltered and paused before the glimmer of a grin on her daughter's face. "Anybody would tell you exactly the same things; I am not biased, dear, truly," she urged, flushing. The glimmer was dutifully repressed, though it still lurked close to the surface.

"Of course, he's splendid," Maida assented. "By the way, does Billy come with him?"

"Oh, no; he will take rooms somewhere. He has been very sweet and nice—it makes me very happy, Maida, that both our children take it so—so kindly."

"Oh, it's all right. I'm glad if you are," Maida reassured her. When her mother was called away, a few minutes later, the glimmer returned; she picked up the photograph again and studied with twinkling eyes the solid citizen it represented. Across the back was boldly written, "For Fanny," and a quotation beginning, "Unto the riper years—" Maida hastily put it down.

"Oh, Lord!" she murmured.

One afternoon two weeks later, Maida frankly posted herself at the garden-gate toward six o'clock, when a blaze of curly red hair and a short pipe usually signaled the passing of her future stepbrother. His droll face, like a narrow block of white wood curiously carved, creased into a smile at sight of her.

"I was waiting for you, Billy; I want a talk with you," Maida said, opening the gate.

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"Why didn't you pretend that the meeting was accidental, and start with surprise? I should have felt more flattered," he suggested, following her across the lawn to an ancient latticed summer-house.

"Why should I bother to flatter you, Billy Reynolds?" Maida demanded.

"Well, girls always do. Besides, I expect to hand you out numerous bouquets."

"It will be a change. You slapped me once in this very summer-house."

"And I dare say I shall again. I certainly shall if you bite my thumb half off, as you did that day."

"It was your own fault for trying to cover two-thirds of the chocolate with it. I only wanted my fair half."

"Well, I will send you up a cake of Peter's, if that is what you called me in about." They both laughed.

"No; I wanted to talk to you about your father. Truly, Billy, you have got to make him behave."

"What on earth is he doing? I'd run a mile to see him actually misbehave," he added with an eagerness whose roots lay deep in his own past.

"He stays too late," said Maida with indignation. "Mother always wakes up at dawn anyway, and here he is keeping her up till eleven and twelve four nights a week—it's too much for her. She can't sleep daytimes, and she is getting so nervous and tired. I don't exactly like to pound on the floor or wind the hall-clock, but—" Under Billy's hoot of laughter her frown melted into an answering laugh.

"I might come and take him home at ten," he suggested. "Why doesn't your mother fire him?"

"She promises to, but she's so afraid of hurting his feelings. Besides, you know——"

"Well?"

"Well, I think she sort of—likes having him. She wants him to stay." Billy hooted again at the reluctance of the admission.

"I suppose you never wanted any one to stay, yourself!"

"Certainly not, after a sensible hour!"

He looked at her meditatively. "It might be good sport to—enlighten your dense ignorance." His tone was derisive, but some expression in his red-brown eyes made her frown restively.

"Oh, we will leave all that to our parents," she said impatiently. "But couldn't you give your father a hint?"

There was humor in the slow shake of his head. "I don't see myself doing it, someway."

"Well, then, I suppose I shall have to. I am not going to have her all worn out." She rose with a definiteness that brought him reluctantly to his feet.

"You don't have any trouble sending people home yourself, do you!" he commented.

"Of course not," said Maida, wholly missing the application. He smiled to himself as he held out his hand.

MAIDA KEPT HER EYES ON THE PHOTOGRAPH.

"You're a fine, strong woman, Maida," he said. "It's splendid characters like you that pass bills through the legislature and get the suffrage and all that. But sometimes you get something else, just the samie. And get it bad." Maida resentfully drew away her hand.

"Oh, good *night*," she said.

When the Judge, with his solemn shyness and his top hat, mounted the steps the following evening, the somewhat rakish figure of his son lounged in his wake.

"Father bribed me to come and keep you out of the way to-night," he announced to Maida, who opened the wire door for them.

"My dear Will! How can you tell such an

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untruth!" The Judge was red with righteous wrath. "I assure you, Maida——"

"Oh, I know Billy!" she comforted him. "I never believe him. Mother is in the sitting-room, Judge Reynolds. I am going out to weed the pansies, Billy—you may come if you like."

"But I am calling on you," he protested as the Judge, superhumanly erect and still slightly glowering, entered the sitting-room. "You can't go about your chores just as if you were alone."

"Why not?"

"When you have been home a little longer, Maida, you will realize that a man caller is not to be taken lightly or forced to weed the garden. They give him the best chair here and make him lemonade and— What is it?" For Maida was staring after the Judge with a look of incredulous dismay. Yet the tableau seen through the half-open door was not a surprising one under the circumstances.

"I WAS WAITING FOR YOU, BILLY."

"Boys will be boys, you know," Billy reminded her gravely. "We have to be patient with the young people, my dear."

Maida turned to the dusky garden. "Oh, it's all right if they like it," she said with an expressive wrinkling of her nose. "One comfort, you can take him home early to-night and let mother get some sleep."

"Exactly why I came"—Billy seated himself on the steps and took out a cigarette—"only I'm not going so infernally early myself," he added, his tone decided but his eye cautiously inquiring.

"I couldn't do the pansies to-day, it was so hot," said Maida, kneeling before a gold and purple bed beside the steps.

"I said," repeated Billy with cold emphasis, "that I was not going home so infernally early myself."

"Well?"

"Haven't you the manners to express pleasure at the news?" She laughed in spite of herself.

"I'll tell you how I feel about it later in the evening," she said.

Promptly at ten o'clock the Judge was interrupted in the story of an important legal battle by the entrance of the young people with a pitcher of lemonade. Twenty minutes later, as he walked home with his son, he commented approvingly on this sweet little daughterly act.

"Maida is a very thoughtful girl," he added contentedly.

"Oh, yes, she's thoughtful," Billy assented. He seemed depressed.

Billy came frequently after that, and the Judge, being a methodical person, soon fell into the way of taking his departure shortly after ten, whether his son were there or not. But having plenty of time for sleep did not produce the expected effect on Mrs. Hamilton. She seemed to become daily more wan, more nervous, and her appetite, always small, disappeared altogether. Maida watched her with indignant anxiety.

"Why don't they marry and get it over with? What is the sense of waiting till October?" she demanded of Billy one evening; she was mounted on a ladder training and pruning the vines with which the old summer-house was heaped up and running over, while he sat on the step beneath discontentedly watching her. His good spirits seemed to have deserted him of late.

"You're always so busy," he complained. "Why can't you sit down here and be sociable like anybody else?"

"Oh, I like to get things done." The scissors snapped energetically and several long sprays of honeysuckle fell about his head. "But about mother and the Judge—why don't they?"

"I believe the idea was to let you down easy—give you a summer to get used to the idea."

"Well, I'd rather cut that out and have a sane and orderly household. We have had steak three times this week because mother forgot that she had ordered it before, and half the time there's no butter for breakfast or

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not an egg in the house. She has given up eating, herself, and the consequence is— Oh, I think engaged people are dreadful!"

Billy was weaving the honeysuckle-sprays into a wreath.

"I don't have any trouble with the old boy," he observed. "He eats and sleeps about as usual."

"Men have a little sense," Maida conceded, coming down to move her ladder. When she had finished her work she sat on the step beside him and submitted indifferently to having the honeysuckle-wreath placed on her hair. His hands lingered over the task, his eyes resting gravely on her clear profile.

"I must train the vines on the wood-shed to-morrow," said Maida. His hand fell with exasperated heaviness on her shoulder.

"Woman, wake up!" he exclaimed. "Here it is a night full of stars, and you look like a dream princess with your hair full of flowers—and you talk about the wood-shed! Don't you ever see an inch beyond the practical?"

She drew away resentfully from his hand. "You needn't knock me over," she protested. He sighed.

"Well, I said I should probably slap you again on this historic spot," he said more mildly. His quaint, comedian face looked old and tired in the dim light. Maida turned away from it frowning, but her eyes came back to it again and again in the half-hour of silence that followed.

"I can't help it, Billy," she said suddenly.

"I know you can't, dearest." It was spoken so quietly and naturally, that amazing word, that she could not take offense, could not even seem to notice it; and yet it was disturbing. She almost forgot his presence as she sat turning it over, wondering at it, throwing it angrily away, and then curiously picking it up again. Dearest—strange little word, she thought, to have so big an echo!

IN SPOTLESS PRECISION WAITING.

She was startled back to the present by the appearance of the reformed Judge.

"After ten, Will; time to be going. We old people can't sit up like you young ones," he added innocently. Maida looked self-conscious, but Will laughed outright.

Mrs. Hamilton had already gone to her room when Maida went in. The girl's sleep was broken and troubled that night, and whenever she wakened she had a sense of sighs and uneasy turnings in the next room. Starting up from a doze as the clock struck three, she saw a light under her mother's door. She rose in wrath.

"Why aren't you asleep?" she demanded from the doorway.

"It seems to me — rather close." Her mother spoke guiltily, and the eyes she lifted from her book were unmistakably tear-stained. Maida stumped severely to the windows, opening them wider and fastening back the curtains. With her back to her mother she took the plunge.

"If you're waiting till October on my account," she began abruptly, "I wish you wouldn't. I should much prefer it right now."

"There is no hurry; October will do very well." Mrs. Hamilton spoke quietly, a little coldly, her eyes on her book, but Maida was sure that the firmly closed lips would quiver helplessly at another word. She turned uncertainly back to her own room.

"Well, good night. Do sleep," she urged.

They avoided each other's eyes in the morning, but it was quite clear that Mrs. Hamilton was unhappy. Maida tried to cheer her with references to the Judge's sterling qualities, but, after a wan assent, her mother seemed to sink deeper than ever into depression. Then Maida turned firmly to cheerful topics of general interest, and invited her mother to go to drive. But it was a weary drive, talking to deaf ears and pointing out the beauties of nature to sad little elderly eyes that more than once filled with tears. Maida knew that she ought boldly to demand the cause, but her horror of sentimental confidences was too strong.

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"He has hurt her feelings or something; engaged people are always like that," she reassured herself.

The next day was a little better. Mrs. Hamilton became quite cheerful after supper as she sat in spotless precision waiting for the Judge. Maida, sitting on the front steps, found herself watching for two figures; whereupon she rose impatiently and sought a hoe.

"Idiocy seems to be contagious," she muttered, going viciously at the weeds under the hollyhocks. Mrs. Hamilton came out presently and stood watching her from the porch.

"They are late to-night," said Maida cheerfully.

"Yes; he is always here before this." The brief brightness had left Mrs. Hamilton's face. Maida's next slash nearly laid low a hollyhock. She went indoors presently, but all the evening she could not lose consciousness of the frail little figure sitting motionless on the veranda.

At nine o'clock she gripped the situation.

"Something must have detained him," she said, coming out and seating herself on the balustrade.

"Yes; it is very much what I have been expecting." Mrs. Hamilton's voice sounded dim and hopeless

"Expecting?"

"Yes, Maida. I think it has all been a—a mistake." Maida was startled out of her horror of confidences.

"You don't want to do it?"

"Oh, no, dear! I mean, yes—it is not that. But I think the Judge—I have been noticing for some weeks—I am an old woman, Maida, and it was folly to suppose I could—hold such a—such an important man. I understand perfectly—" The poor little voice faltered.

"But, mother, he seems so happy and satisfied; and this is the first night he has missed coming," Maida urged. Mrs. Hamilton bravely dried her eyes.

"I know, dear. But I have been noticing he—he does not stay nearly so long as he used to. And I think he sometimes—I don't mean this unkindly—but I think he sometimes brings his son just so as to—to break it up in good season. I am not speaking in blame—I understand perfectly. But it has—it has kept me from sleeping so well, and so I suppose I am—easily upset. You must excuse me, dear." A sob broke from her and she went blindly into the house. Maida stared after her in sick dismay. So this was what she had wrought; and she had meant so well!

The gate clicked and a footstep on the gravel sent a curious pang, half pleasant, half terrifying, through her left side. It passed abruptly as she recognized the Judge. He was in business clothes and an unwonted air of the day's disorder hung about him.

"Good evening, Maida. Am I too late to come in?" he asked apologetically. "I was kept down-town until now——"

Maida clutched her courage in both hands.

"I am glad you came—I want to speak to you. Judge Reynolds, I don't think mother is very well. I think she ought to go away for a few weeks." He looked so dismayed that she could have embraced him. "Being engaged seems to be a great strain," she went on bravely. "I wish that—October were not so far away." His face lit up.

"Why, my dear, your mother thought that you— Well, really, there is no fixed law about October. So far as that goes, next week would—" She grasped his arm.

"Go and tell her that," she whispered. Then she ran down into the garden, leaving him to find the way in.

A whistle from the gate brought again that curious stab of expectancy. She was absorbed in unscrewing the hose when Will came through the shrubbery.

"Is my father here?" he asked. "I have been waiting all the evening to chaperon him."

"Oh, he's here!" said Maida dryly.

"Misbehaving?"

"Not exactly. But if ever I have anything to do with engaged people again!"

"But you will—you can't help yourself!" It was not too dark for him to see a sudden tide of color in her face. He came and took the hose from her. "Let me help you, dearest," he said, his air entirely practical as he knelt down by the faucet. The little word echoed and reverberated about her.

"Don't you call me that!" she cried desperately. Will, at her feet, smiled to himself.

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STRAIGHT TALK

If at any time there are any statements in EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE which you believe to be incorrect, or any views expressed to which you take exception, or any subject discussed upon which you can throw additional light, write to us. We shall not be able to publish all the letters. Do not write at too great length. We may use excerpts from your letter and sign your initials unless otherwise instructed. For every letter which we are able to publish we will present the writer, as evidence of our appreciation and in no sense as compensation, with a year's subscription to EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, to be sent to the writer of the letter, or any one selected by the writer.—THE EDITOR.

AN ANTI-LEOPOLD MOVEMENT

YOUR recent article in EVERYBODY'S regarding the Congo question has aroused much comment, both favorable and unfavorable. Some say it went too far, others that it was highly justifiable.

In my opinion you have thrown the weight of your great influence on the right side. God grant that your example may make other magazines and reviews take the same course, for it is only by bringing these facts before the people that a wave of enthusiastic humanitarianism may be started that shall bring King Leopold and his fellow members beneath the sea of universal wrath.

We are all with you here; about the middle of this month we expect to have a mass-meeting, when Governor Guild and others will speak, and everybody will be urged to join the cause. We hope colleges everywhere will follow our suit, and confidently expect that such an intercollegiate movement will bring results.

Cambridge, Mass. A HARVARD STUDENT.

HELP FOR BACKWARD CHILDREN

I JUST want to thank you, and through you the author, for the good that the paper on "A City of Special Schools" has done, in this one town alone. A school trustee read the article at a meeting, and the ideas given in it are the foundation of the plan to add a special teacher for backward pupils.

I was speaking of the article to a sweet little mother, who asked me to loan the magazine to her. She read it, and before now you have her subscription. You see, her little boy, because of a serious blow on the head, is not very bright, and the article touched a tender cord. She said: "That told me so much, and the doctor I showed the article to advised me to do all those little things it told me how to do, to keep Harold employed, and in that way keep him cheery; and maybe it will help him." MRS. Z. B.

Vicksburg, Miss.

FROM THE CONGO CONSUL-GENERAL

THE anti-Congo campaign is founded on misrepresentation. Mr. Park begins his article in the December EVERYBODY'S with a misrepresentation—ends with one—and scatters a lot of them in between. He begins by saying that any missionary who has been to Africa will tell you that the Congo Free State is "hell." Mr. Park either knows his statement to be false or else he does not know anything about the Congo. The sentiment of the great body of missionaries actively working in the Congo Free State supports King Leopold's administration. It is true that fifty-two missionaries have signed "an appeal" against the government. Of this number thirty-five lived in the coast district and were criticizing things supposed to have happened in the interior. One of them arrived in the Congo for the first time on December 23, 1905, and nineteen days later signed the document condemning the administration of a kingdom one-third the size of the United States. This was the snap judgment of fifty-two missionaries out of about five hundred, yet the Congo Reform Association attempts to pass it off as the sentiment of the missionary body. What the other 450 think about the matter is much more important.

Here is a statement conveying the sentiments of nearly four hundred Catholic missionaries in

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the Congo. It is a letter signed (1904) by the principals of all the Catholic missionaries out there—Scheut Fathers, Jesuits, Redemptorists, Order of Prémontré, White Fathers of Africa, and Priests of the Sacred Heart:

Up to this date we have left to others the care of answering the unjustifiable charges made of late against the Free State. But as Mr. Morel now accuses the Catholic missionaries of being silent by order or out of self-interest, we owe it to our honor to give his allegations a public and completely unanimous denial. Our Catholic missionaries have never gainsaid that in Congoland—as in all new colonies—cruelties have been practised in isolated instances. They have not had to denounce such cruelties, however, because, to the knowledge of all, the government of the Free State has always been prompt to redress abuses in order to prevent their recurrence.

The Apostolic Vicar, Monsignor Van Ronslé, writes:

During the period of fifteen years that I have been in the Congo, neither myself nor, as far as I know, anybody among my missionaries has ever been an eye-witness to any act of cruelty, nor has ever seen the effect of such an act.

Monsignor Roelens says:

I am able to assert as absolute truth that during the twelve years I have spent here not a single case of inhuman treatment inflicted by a white man on a negro has ever come to my knowledge.

There is no suggestion of hell in all this nor is there anything of the kind in the letters of Father Colle, Father Maguire, Father Beynen, Monsignor Augouard, nor of the Protestant missionaries such as Millman, Clarke, and George. Unfortunately the space of 500 words which the editor has with great courtesy placed at my disposal does not permit of further quotation.

It is true that most of these witnesses for the Congo are Catholics, but it must be remembered that the large majority of the missionaries in the Congo are of that church. No Christian, of whatever creed he be, can for a moment think that this noble army of nearly four hundred Catholic missionaries who are laying down their lives for the salvation of Africa would condone "atrocities" or uphold a corrupt administration.

I regret there is no space to take up other phases of the subject, but, in conclusion, I wish to say that the anti-Congo agitation is not only carried on by misrepresentation, but that it seems to have some ulterior object which is not reform. The reforms asked for by the Congo agitators have been granted, and have been put into operation. That the agitators continue their campaign is an indication that they desire not reforms but rather the destruction of the Congo Government.

JAMES GUSTAVUS WHITELEY,
Consul-General.

PLAIN SPEAKING APPROVED

I WISH to express my admiration and unqualified approval of your course in regard to King Leopold and the Congo. Our newspapers and magazines have, it seems to me, for the most part, pursued a cowardly course in regard to this whole matter. I am proud that we have one magazine that dares to speak out in the name of God and humanity. The apathy on the part of Americans in regard to this matter is unaccountable. All honor to you for the noble stand you have taken. More than ever I shall be a reader of EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE. J. L. C.

Cambridge, Mass.

ENGLAND IN INDIA

THE preservation of perfect sympathy between the English and the American people seems to me so important in the interests of human welfare that I hope you will allow me to explain away some misapprehensions concerning British rule in India embodied in the article by Mr. Charles Edward Russell lately appearing in your pages. I lived for more than ten years in India as the editor of the *Pioneer*, the principal Anglo-Indian daily newspaper; was in touch with the government of the period, and am thus entitled to speak from knowledge and experience.

Mr. Russell is appalled at the contrast between the poverty of the masses in India and the luxury of the governing class. I do not know of any country in which such contrasts are not to be found. In India British rule has minimized the loss of life by famine, has entirely suppressed the slaughter formerly due to internal warfare, has done as much as native prejudice will allow toward encouraging sanitation, and as a consequence the population increases to the ultimate subsistence limit. As the native of India can subsist on very little, the poverty of the masses cannot but be painfully apparent.

Mr. Russell talks of so many deaths by preventable plague. The Indian people will not tolerate such interference with their domestic life as preventive measures of a thoroughgoing kind would entail. In Bombay, when attempts were made a few years ago to enforce sanitary regulations, riots began that threatened serious political trouble.

Mr. Russell talks of the loss of life by famine as if it were due to the apathy of the government. Famines were enormously more destructive to life in the pre-British period (*vide* Hunter's "Rural Bengal"), and efforts to reduce their severity have been almost the main occupation of Indian government for the last thirty years. In a country where the inhabitants of vast territories depend upon the food they grow, droughts, when they occur, are inevitably disastrous.

The excess of Indian exports as compared with imports is described by your critic as a

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drain of wealth to which the dependency is subjected for the benefit of the ruling power. This is perhaps the most cruel misrepresentation of all. The drain in question represents for the most part interest on loans for the benefit of India. Her railways have cost £250,000,000 borrowed in England at about four per cent.; for irrigation works, other gigantic sums have been borrowed. The operation pays the borrowing country handsomely. I believe United States exports have largely exceeded imports for many years in the past. Does that mean that the wealth of the country is drained by a foreign tyrant?

Mr. Russell was shocked at seeing somewhere a notice that "low-caste servants and dogs" were denied admittance to a certain temple. But the temple is a native institution, the notice an illustration of native feeling! The caste system of India is deplorable, of course, but it is ingrained in the habits of the Indian people and can no more be changed by government interference than can the color of their skin.

If I had the opportunity of writing at greater length I could show good reasons for my solemn conviction that the British government of India is the most high-minded, unselfish, and, considering its difficulties, the most successful and the best government in the world. It does seem very hard that the great people of America, our own blood kindred, should be led to take a harsh and unjust view of the grandest achievement that stands to the credit of the old flag—the pacification of India and its guidance on the long path leading to a higher civilization.

A. P. S.

THE MEN WHO OUGHT NOT TO VOTE

In his story of "The Men Who Are to Vote," in the October Everybody's, Mr. Ernest Poole gives us one side, and one only, of the immigration question—a question which should be of vital importance to every American citizen.

I, too, have been at Ellis Island. I have watched from the gallery the incoming hordes surging up the narrow stairway into the great vaulted room, into America. I have seen the honest, homely faces, the steady eyes, the brawny arms, of which he writes so optimistically; but I have seen also the lowering brute brows, the sullen shifty glances, the mark of the beast. It is quite safe to say that for every million desirable immigrants, a million most undesirable enter neck and neck with them. Two million aliens a year—it is startling when you face the fact soberly. Unrestrained, they pour into the United States, "the dumping-ground of Europe"—the scum of Russia, the dregs of Poland—two million, five million, if they like. What do they want, these hordes? Education? The chance to justify their existence in their new country? Rarely enough! Merely to make as much money, with as little expense of time and trouble, as possible; to get all they can, and to give no more than they have to. Honest and worthy citizens have been and will be evolved from this jetsam of the earth's peoples, but they are the shining exception.

It is getting to be a more serious problem than the government bargained for ten years ago—ask the inspectors. And the reasons why the problem has assumed such proportions—ask the steamship companies. Take the little government steamer back again, Mr. Poole, and show us Ellis Island, not as it ought to be, but as it is—the antechamber to anarchy, the sluiceway of viciousness, greed, ignorance, low morals, as well as the threshold of the Land of Canaan. There's a big story in it, which many will hear, startled, for the first time. But the steamship companies won't approve!

C. B. T.

New York City.

CASTE IN AMERICA

Permit me to indulge in a hand-clap on Mr. McCardell's "Help" article. His is the first accurate analysis of the servant problem that has come under my notice. He made a bull's-eye when he pointed out that our departure from American traditions of equality and democracy into strange paths of snobbery and caste has brought swift retribution. For this domestic evil, as for the ills of the body politic, we have ourselves to thank. Wherever questions of social superiority and inferiority become important, wherever a human being is permitted to feel that his or her occupation is less honorable than another's, all kinds of untoward conditions are bound to arise. The cause of much more serious developments than the lack of servants is to be found in this growing class feeling. "Caste" and "strata" mean a social pressure, and that means an old man of the sea on somebody's neck. Can you blame that somebody for not tripping over himself in his eagerness to play a willing Sindbad and be "a good servant, content with his station in life"?

J. E. R.

New York.

ANOTHER ONLY CHILD

Though I recognize the many theoretical advantages of a large family, I must enter my plea for the only child. I speak from the dual experience of being an only child and having an only child.

My childhood was nurtured and guarded as was the life of the only child whose autobiography appears in the November Everybody's—but it was far from lonely. There were all the other children in the neighborhood to flock in, and their daily visits became a habit. They always pre-

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ferred to come to my home, for the little mother made them so welcome, and noise—the essential element of success in child-play—was always permissible in my home, whereas my special playmate, who was one of seven, must never bring her friends in because of the traditional sleeping baby.

My little daughter, like the other little girl, is a famous reader. But she is as normal a child as exists—loves all animals, outdoor life, and children, when they are interesting and will talk about "things" and not people or clothes. In my opinion the child who can entertain herself for days is far more resourceful and much better equipped for after years than the one who has been one of a group of children always dependent one upon the other.

She may be growing up selfishly and I, love-bound as I am, may be blind to it all. Yet I know that she has many times embarrassed me by giving away her best toys right before company, when I could not restrain her.

This only child knows every maneuver of the bedtime romp and pillow-fight of tradition, for she has one every night with her "daddy"—and what child is not more than proud and happy when a "grown-up" enters with zest into his games?

The other only child admits one advantage in her solitary reign, the perfect intimacy between herself and her parents. Next to a reverential closeness to one's God, is there anything to be so desired as this perfect intimacy? In a large family the interests are divided, scattered, oft-times antagonistic. Not so where there is an only child. Here the tie is secure, the interests are identical, and the oneness is complete.

Chicago, Ill. Z. B. A.

OUR MEDIEVAL SCHOOLS

Our school children batten on the husks of the past. They know more about the tax system of the Roman Empire, and its faults, than they do about the follies of the tax system of their own commonwealth. They are familiar with negro slavery—or rather with its corpse—but they must struggle, unaided, to self-won knowledge of the simpler, present issue of child labor. Why are we dependent on magazines for what we know (if haply we know anything) about trusts, labor organization, the prevention of tuberculosis, immigration, prison reform, civic purity, and the score of other problems that so intimately affect our lives? For knowledge of these matters, though rejected by the schools, is truly the corner-stone of our society.

Let us have done with all flimsy apologies and trumped-up extenuations. Our schools, except in the formal subjects, are wasting parents' money and children's lives while they peddle out unsavory scrapings from the rubbish-heap of a latter-day scholasticism as truly medieval as it is useless. W.

San Francisco, Cal.

FROM THE INSIDE OF THE BUCKET-SHOP

Some ten years ago I was a prosperous and prominent grain-dealer in northern Kansas and southern Nebraska. I commenced taking occasional *trades* in grain and provisions with a bucket-shopping outfit. Gradually I got cleaned out and lost my self-respect far enough to manage a branch for an outfit (Nieman & Co., of Omaha, afterward C. C. Coe, of Minneapolis) at Council Bluffs, Iowa, later for another outfit at Kansas City, thus gaining a thorough insight into the methods employed to part the customer from his money. I have known the operator on the quotation-wire to hold back quotations on a runaway or panicky market and fill two-point margin orders at the quotation then on the blackboard, when on the actual quotation the customer was already "frozen out." I know of another concern incorporated for $25,000, which divided nearly $150,000 net profits one year while things were coming their way; dividing the excess over the $25,000 capital every thirty days. The following year, when the public was "right for once," and they were losing, they failed and compromised on the basis of their $25,000. The balance made the year before was salted down. Heads I win, tails you lose. You bet with me and put up your money in my hands and trust me to pay you, if perchance you should win.

Seeing where I should eventually land, and having a son and daughter growing up, I pulled up short, and being averse to working under another's orders, I moved to a new field and have been farming for a number of years, and am again getting ahead. I am anxious to do what I can to prevent others from being skinned and losing their self-respect, and therefore write you this. In your August number Mr. Teague writes of the plant "The Haight & Freese Company" had for the "execution" of orders. Christie, of Kansas City, had one just like it on the top floor of the Gibraltar Building at Kansas City before the establishment of the National Board of Trade. No customer ever entered that room. The traders "did their trading in a room on the ground floor of the Board of Trade Building," two blocks away. From there the orders were industriously transmitted the entire two blocks by private wire to the Gibraltar Building, and there filled "if they looked good."

I traded myself off and on at Cella's plant at St. Louis, and know something about that. I must say that they came nearer giving their room traders "a run for their money" than any concern I know of. C. F.

Sioux Rapids, Iowa.

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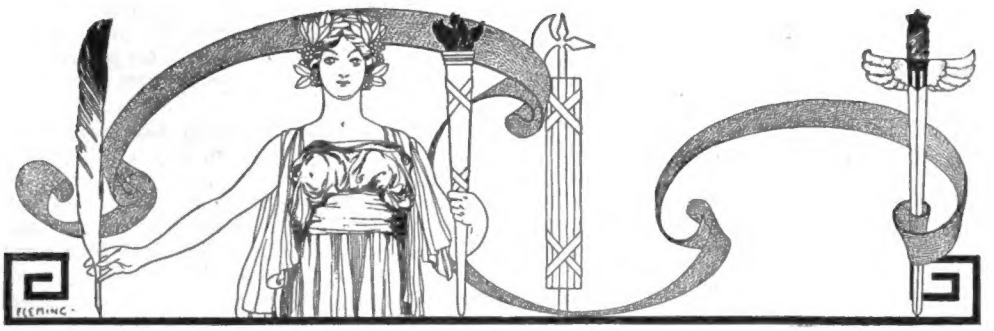

With "Everybody's" Publishers

THERE is one gentleman in this world who never retraces his steps, never even looks behind him, always marches straight ahead, steadily, tirelessly. He is Father Time. In the years when the tides of life are running strong we sometimes rush so far ahead of the old gentleman that we cannot see him when we look back. He seems to be slow and old-fogyish to our inexperience. We see the future full of the unaccomplished and hurry to meet it, pitying the old man who seems unconscious of our vision and unequal to our pace, but steadily, surely as the procession of the worlds, he strides up behind us, then even with us; then, in spite of our most heroic efforts, he swings on ahead and leaves us to eternity.

Christmas and New Year's are here again. Artists represent them to us as babes so that we can grasp them and hold them for a little if we will. But all of us know that the spirit of Christmas and the spirit of the years are as old as the Father who gave us them. They were here ages long before we came; they will be here ages long after we are gone.

We stand on the threshold of 1907. What will we do with it? No two of us will do the same. Differing environments, differing ages, differing temperaments lead each along his own paths; give each his own attitude toward his fellows, each his own hopes and his own fears.

No one can make New Year's resolutions for another. You cannot make them for us; we cannot make them for you. For the very words we would use to name the resolutions would mean as many different things as there are people to read them. We cannot tell you what this magazine's New Year's resolutions are, in a way that will make them mean the same to you that they do to us. Possibly we can suggest their spirit. It will help you to understand if you will first look at the illustrations by Miss Bessie Marsh, on page 36; then read Mr. Russell's summary of what he found on his trip around the world, on page 15; then read the "Autobiography of a Child with Two Parents," on page 116. We would like to ask you to read the whole magazine through from beginning to end, but these three articles will give you the point we are trying to bring home to you. The greatest work that any individual, any magazine can engage in is work for the Common Good.

We are resolved to do more and better work for the Common Good during 1907 than we were able to do during 1906.

SOAP-SUDS

WHEN you were little did you ever take the wash-pan or -bowl, fill it with water at just the right temperature, wash a cake of soap in it until you had a nice suds, and then get your long-stemmed white clay pipe? My, what a beautiful day it was, that first day with the soap-bubbles! And as you became more expert you made bigger and bigger bubbles and made them float farther and farther, and as you caught the iridescent sheen of their beauties, as they floated up and away, you forgot your playmates and the rest of the world and dreamed yourself away with your bubbles. Do you recall what brought you back from that dream to earth again? Wasn't it when in your excitement or your abstraction you sucked up a mouthful of

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soap-suds? And we have discovered that, as we go through life, at each new experience the taste of the suds somewhere gets into the delight of the bubbles. Sometimes it seems to be all suds. Rarely it is unmixed joy. Our experience so far with our new publication, *Ridgway's*, is about half suds and half bubbles, and the suds have tasted more than ordinarily bitter. The soap we used must have had too much lye in it or something. We have changed the soap. Already there is a marked improvement. If necessary we will change the water and the pipe and the basin and everything in fact but the outdoors. We can't change that. If you are interested enough to keep an eye on *Ridgway's* from week to week you will see how we progress in the gentle art of blowing this particular bubble.

A TEST OF FRIENDSHIP

MANY of you must have marked the little note of discouragement that crept into the article by Mr. Lawson, in our November number, in which he gave his reasons for delaying the announcement of his Remedy and his decision to write fiction until such time as conditions will be ripe for the Remedy. We have asked Mr. Lawson to permit us to reproduce below a few of the letters that his friends hurried to him urging him to keep on with his good work and bidding him Godspeed.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., October 23, 1906.

Mr. THOMAS LAWSON, Boston.

My Dear Sir: It was with sincere regret that I noticed a tone of discouragement running through your remarks in the last EVERYBODY'S, which after the many disappointments and sad experiences of last year is as natural as a host of your friends hope it is transitory. I hope also you will not frown at a stranger writing to you—it is for the love of the cause you espouse that I do it. You have undertaken a tremendous revolution; and, like a Hannibal or Cæsar or Napoleon, you cannot win in a year, nor can you win without terrible opposition. It is easier to conquer men than to conquer money, but in the end—if *they* earned immortality for themselves, what will the gratitude of the future be toward *you* if you succeed? Some people and papers may deny it out of malice or out of envy, but in the secret of our hearts we all know that *to you* we owe the partial awakening of the American public, which is already beginning to manifest itself in a wave of reform sweeping over the whole country. Now this is not the end. The giant is only opening his eyes. He has yet to stretch himself and realize his position and strike out. Just as our people were aroused in 1860 and crushed the slavery of the negro, so they will awake again and crush this latest slavery out of existence. Mr. Lawson, if you will pardon me for meddling with your plans—with the ability which God gave you, with the wit and ready command of your pen, with the rhythmic flow of your sentences which even your worst enemies cannot fail to admire—why do you not produce a great and popular book, a great novel that will strike the right chords in the hearts of the masses, and do for the present generation what "Uncle Tom's Cabin" did for the last? Are not our writers breaking their heads to *invent* sensational plots to feed a public crazy for a sensational stage and sensational library? You, Mr. Lawson, do not have to *invent*—feed the sensation-loving public with the *real* "stuff," and if they cannot swallow and digest it, as spread before them in EVERYBODY'S, they will swallow it when poked down their throat by the means of *drama* and *novel*. You are the man to do it, and although you may at times feel discouraged and isolated, and begin to think that you are going to be left alone—you just listen for that distant roar—it is the people—slow people for whom you move a little too fast—who are following in your wake.

Begging your pardon for imposing upon your time, and hoping to live to see you and your cause triumph, I am, Very sincerely yours,

F. J.

EVERETT, WASH., October 20, 1906.

THOMAS W. LAWSON, ESQ., Boston, Mass.

My Dear Sir: Have just read your article in the November number of EVERYBODY'S and my response is "God bless you." You are a man after my own heart. Am in moderate circumstances, but would give up a ten-dollar gold piece for the pleasure of shaking you by the hand. The common people regard you as a benefactor. Don't you ever think for a moment that the seeds you are sowing are falling upon barren soil. The carelessness and ignorance of the masses may postpone for a time the full fruition of your aims and purposes, but there are enough responsive souls to "leaven the whole lump." If God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of the wilderness, He as surely has raised up Thomas W. Lawson to lead the poor, weak, befuddled American people out of the financial jungle in which they are entangled. Let the good work go on, for no man in any age has ever been engaged in a greater. Here's looking toward you, Tom. Sincerely yours,

M. S.

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